

No T. 98.30-37

13-16

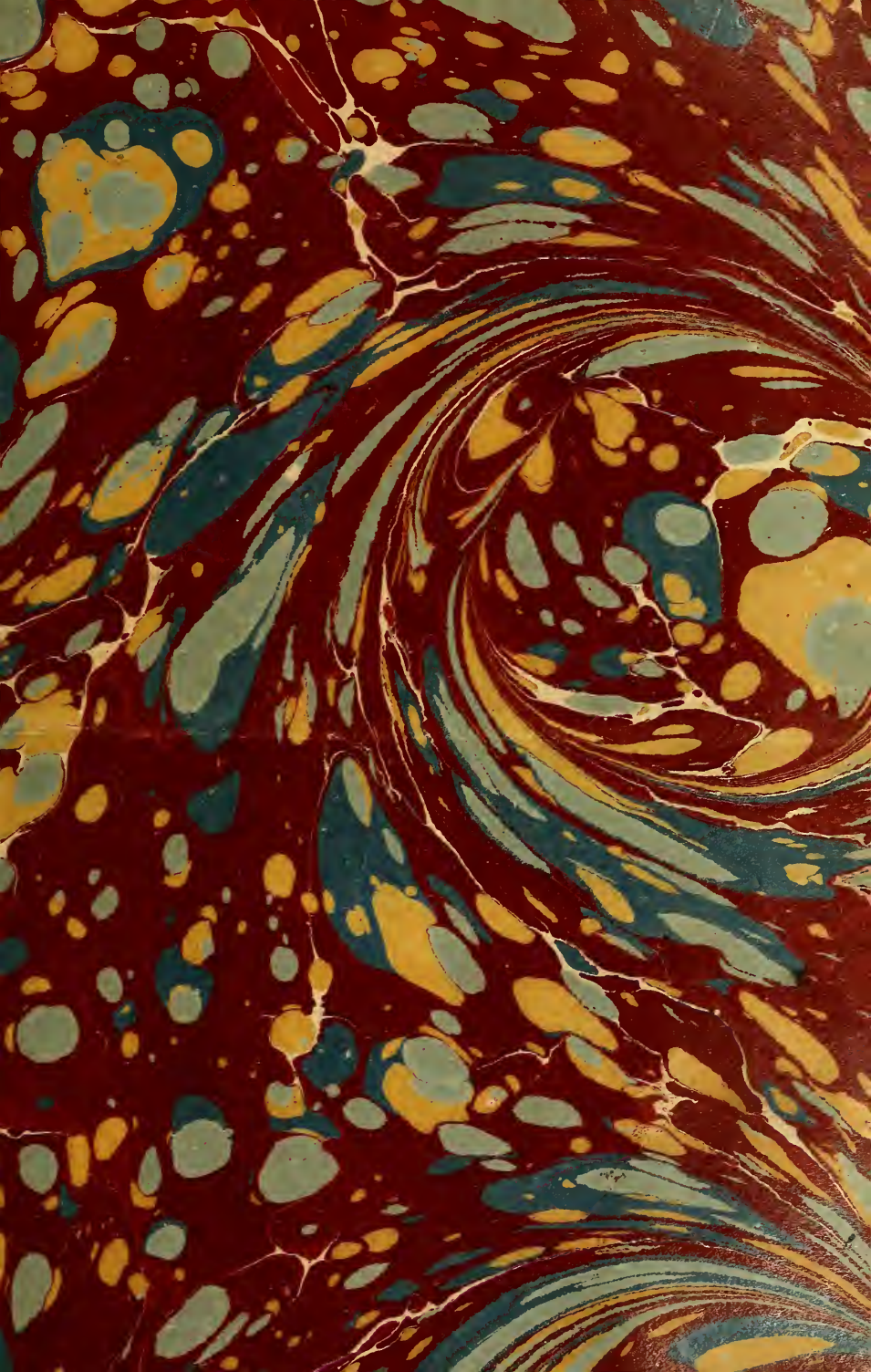


THE
ALLEN·A·BROWN
DRAMATIC
COLLECTION

THE·PUBLIC·LIBRARY
OF·THE·CITY·OF
BOSTON

EDMUND·H·GARRETT·1910·OPUS·65

13-10





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2011 with funding from
Boston Public Library

DRAWING-ROOM DRAMAS.

3

R2

PAUL BEDFORD.

WITH

HINTS TO AMATEURS.

BY

BRACEBRIDGE HEMYNG,

(AUTHOR OF "ETON SCHOOL DAYS," ETC., ETC.)



LONDON:

CHARLES HENRY CLARKE, 13 PATERNOSTER ROW.

c

PREFACE.

THE following Plays are specially constructed for home and private theatricals, as well as for public dramatic representation.

Special care has been taken to render them in every way unobjectionable in language, pure in sentiment, brisk in dialogue, varying in incident, fresh and sparkling in originality, and calculated to afford an agreeable, pleasant, and intellectual evening's entertainment both to the actors and the audience.

With this brief preface now we ring the prompter's bell, and say, with the gifted dramatist of bygone days, "Then up, curtain, and let us see what our painters have done for us."—Sheridan's "Critic."

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
HINTS TO AMATEURS	9
STAGE DIRECTIONS	15
LOVE TO THE RESCUE	17
JUST BEFORE MARRIAGE	37
BEYOND HIS INCOME	67
TAKEN BY SURPRISE	109

HINTS TO AMATEURS.

HOME PLAYS are now becoming so extensively adopted as a favourite means of harmlessly and intellectually passing many a pleasant evening amid a circle of friends, that it may, perhaps, not be irrelevant to offer a few "*Hints to Amateurs*" with regard to the production and management of PRIVATE THEATRICALS.

Two drawing-rooms opening into each other by means of folding-doors are the most suitable for the production and representation of Home Plays, since one of the apartments may be employed as a stage, while the other accommodates the audience. Where such are not available, a little tact and experience will soon suggest other expedients. For instance, if there be but one room available, a division may be formed by a wooden framework partitioning off the depth of the stage.

A curtain may be so constructed as either to roll up, like an ordinary window-blind, or, like a pair of curtains, meeting in the middle, and capable of being moved freely, by means of cords and rings, upon a brass rod or a wooden pole.

"With respect to lighting* the front part, or supply-

* LACY'S *Amateur's Handbook*.

ing footlights, procure six, eight, or ten tin sconces, the backs of which, being highly polished, will reflect a strong light on the stage. . . . Whether the portable theatre be fixed in one room, or one of two rooms be made the stage, care should be taken that the part allotted for the latter should have at least one door leading into it, and in the left-hand corner, from the stage, should be placed a chair, and, if there be sufficient space, a small table for the use of the prompter. Care should also be taken, if the rooms be not very lofty, that the actors are prevented from standing beneath the frame-work of the folding-doors, or the proscenium of the portable stage, as, if this be permitted, their height being greater in proportion to that of the stage, they will appear ludicrously gigantic."

With regard to scene-painting, excellent practical advice is supplied in the following extract from *The Penny Cyclopædia* :—

"Beginning with what is technically called the *drop-scene*, as being the simplest of all, we have merely to remark that it is no more than a picture, or single painted surface, let down by way of blind or curtain between the acts, so as to close up the opening of the proscenium. As it generally continues to be used almost for an indefinite time—the one at Covent Garden has been there ever since the theatre was rebuilt (1809)—the drop is more carefully executed than back scenes, which, showy as they may be in effect, are required only for a season, and are at a much greater distance from the spectators. As far, too, as pictorial effect and

truth of perspective are concerned, a drop shows itself to far greater advantage than other scenery, which is composed of different pieces, constituting what is called a set of scenes. These consist of the narrow upright pieces, called *side-scenes*, or *wings*; of the narrow horizontal ones (*hanging scenes*, or *soffits*, painted to imitate a sky or ceiling, but chiefly intended to screen the space over the stage), and of the *back scene*. Backs, again, are of *two* kinds—viz., *rolling* scenes, which are let down from above, and *flats*, which are formed by two sliding scenes strained upon framing, like the wings, and meeting each other and uniting in the centre. These are employed when what are termed *practicable* scenes are required—that is, with doors, windows, &c., which admit of being used as real doors, &c.; or else when there is occasion that the '*flat*' should suddenly open and discover another scene behind it.

“In addition to these there are what are termed *open flats*, which are scenes cut out in places, so that both the background is seen and the actors can pass through them. They are commonly used for the representation of groves or forests, but sometimes for interiors with open arches.

“There are, besides what are technically known as *pieces*, narrow scenes placed obliquely on one side of the stage, when it is wanted to show a cottage or corner of a house with a *practicable* door in it.

“Lastly, there is *set scenery*, as it is termed—a species of stage decoration very recently introduced, where, instead of the usual wings ranged one behind the other,

there is a single scene on each side extending from front to back, so that the stage is completely enclosed. By this means a more perfect representation of a room can be obtained than where wings are employed. In fact, side-scenes or wings can be regarded as little better than so many detached screens absolutely necessary to shut out from view the space on each side of the stage, since, of themselves, they rather detract from than at all aid illusion and effect; more especially in interiors, where what should represent a continuous wall or surface on either side is broken into several pieces, which are, besides, placed parallel to the back scene or flat, instead of being at right angles to it. If the scenery be viewed exactly from the centre, and from the true perspective distance, the defect is not very striking or offensive; but if the spectator be near the stage or placed on one side of the house, the whole becomes more or less distorted, and the wings only so many disjointed fragments, so that all scenic illusion is destroyed; and should the back scene be at a considerable distance, no part of it will be visible to those in the boxes next the proscenium, but merely the range of wings on one side and the gaps between them.

“Scene-painting is executed in *distemper*—that is, with colours mixed up with size, the design being first made in a sketch, which is accurately laid down to scale, and from which the perspective outlines are transferred to the larger surface. Instead of beginning with dead colouring, and then gradually working up his picture, the artist puts in all his effects at once (as in fresco-

painting)—the full tone of the lights and shadows, finishing as he proceeds, and merely re-touching those parts afterwards which require additional depth or brilliancy. In this kind of painting *bravura* of execution and strikingness of effect are indispensable, and nature must be rather exaggerated than the contrary; at the same time care must be taken lest mere gaudiness be substituted for brilliancy and richness.”

Since much of the costume of the piece depends upon him, the scene-painter should not only be well-skilled in architectural delineation, but he should also be well-informed with regard to the styles of different countries and periods, so as to avoid errors and anachronisms.

In addition to the foot-lamps, it sometimes becomes necessary to have lights near the wings, taking the precaution, however, to have all secured by means of glasses. To produce sunlight, yellow glasses are employed, and rose-coloured glasses for sunset. To apply these mediums to the foot-lamps, long strips of these different coloured glasses should be fitted in framework. When not used, they lie flat on the ground across the stage at the proscenium, and, according as occasion requires, they may be raised up, so that the light may shine through and produce the desired effect.

The sound of rain is produced by means of a long narrow box divided into irregular partitions, and containing about a pint of peas. The sound of thunder is imitated by shaking a thin sheet of iron, and lightning is imitated by means of a *Lycopædium* flash-box.

With regard to elocution and action, we may, per-

haps, find the best advice in Hamlet's advice to the players:—

“Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you—trippingly on the tongue. But if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. . . . Be not too tame, neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it may make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others.”—(*Hamlet*, Act iii., Scene 2.)

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*;
S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*. The following view of the Stage, with four Performers in front, will fully demonstrate the *relative positions*.



* * The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.

LOVE TO THE RESCUE.

A Comedietta.

IN TWO ACTS.

OUTLINE OF PLOT.

During the Commonwealth, a Puritan leader (Colonel Morton) has been granted the estate of Beauchamp Towers, forfeited by its Cavalier owners. Captain Langley (an officer in King Charles the Second's Life Guards), proposes for the hand of Edith (Colonel Morton's daughter). The Colonel refers him to the lady herself.

Meanwhile an "unbidden guest" arrives from the Low Countries. He is gentlemanly in his demeanour, but poor and shabby in his attire. He is jeered at by some, but Edith Morton defends him, and cheers and encourages him, little thinking that he is the rightful heir come back to demand the restoration of Beauchamp Towers, which he ultimately obtains, from his indisputable claims, and the strong sense of justice on the part of Colonel Morton.

The Mortons fall from affluence into poverty. But the "rightful heir," Sir Marmaduke, by no means forgets Edith's kindness. He watches over her, fights a duel on her behalf, settles his estates on her, and, after many struggles and the lapse of a year, ultimately wins her hand.

Persons Represented.

SIR MARMADUKE BEAUCHAMP, the Exiled Heir to Beauchamp Towers.

COLONEL MORTON, a Retired Officer of Cromwell's Army.

CAPTAIN LANGLEY, an Officer in the Life Guards of Charles II.

MR. PUFFINGTON, an old Court Beau.

EDITH MORTON, Daughter of Colonel Morton.

LAURA HOWARD, a Friend of Edith Morton's.

Attendants, &c.

TIME.—Restoration of Charles II.

PLACE.—Beauchamp Towers.

Time occupied in Acting—One Hour, or One Hour and Ten Minutes.

LOVE TO THE RESCUE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—THE PROPOSAL.

An Anteroom or Library in Beauchamp Towers.

*Enter CAPTAN LANGLEY (L.) and COLONEL MORTON (R.),
meeting.*

Captain Langley. Well met, Colonel. You're just the very man I want to see. And as we are in private now, with your kind permission, I shall take the opportunity of speaking to you on a subject which is to me of serious—nay, of *vital* importance.

Colonel Morton. Speak on, Captain Langley. I am all attention.

Capt. L. I think it can scarcely have escaped your observation, Colonel, while I have so frequently availed myself of your kind hospitality at Beauchamp Towers, that there is some particular object of attraction here.

Colonel Mor. Go on.

Capt. L. And that is no other than your daughter Edith.

Col. Mor. I thought so.

Capt. L. You know my position in life, Colonel, and my prospects.

Col. Mor. I do.

Capt. L. May I trust, Colonel, that my proposal may not be unacceptable to you?

Col. Mor. To *myself* it is not. You have acted straightforwardly and honourably in speaking to *me* in the first instance. But, as your senior, pardon me for telling you, you have one great defect. You are sometimes too hot-headed and prone to quarrel.

Capt. L. Even this defect shall be amended.

Col. Mor. For your own sake, I hope it may. But, before we proceed further in the matter of which you have spoken to me, my daughter's wishes, inclinations, and feelings must *first* be consulted, for I have determined never to sacrifice *her* happiness for any earthly consideration whatsoever. Now let us go. We can talk of this subject anon.

[*Exeunt* (L.)

SCENE II.—THE UNBIDDEN GUEST.

The Drawing-room, or any large Apartment in Beauchamp Towers.

LAURA HOWARD (L.) and MR. PUFFINGTON (R.) are discovered on the stage.

Laura Howard (laughing). I declare you look the pink of perfection, this morning, Mr. Puffington. But, pardon me, your periwig is slightly awry.

Mr. Puffington. Zounds! Mademoiselle, so it is, now that I look in the glass. But whom have we here? *Enter SIR MARMADUKE BEAUCHAMP (L.), ushered in by a lacquey, who immediately retires (L.).*

(Aside.) A stranger! And a very dilapidated-looking one, too.

Sir Marmaduke (advancing up the stage to LAURA). Mademoiselle, pardon me. I had expected to find Colonel Morton here.

Laura. He will not be absent long, but here comes his daughter.

Walks slowly up the stage, and exit (L.).

Enter EDITH (R.).

Sir Mar. I must apologize, lady, for an unintentional intrusion, as I have urgent private business with Colonel Morton, and had expected to find him here alone.

Edith. No apology is requisite, Sir. My father will not be absent long. But you seem fatigued, and as if after a painful journey?

Sir Mar. I have only just this day returned from the Low Countries.

Mr. Puff. (Aside). Yes, I thought he came from a low, mean country, in consequence of the shabbiness of his attire.

Edith (to SIR MARMADUKE). You will, at least, accept some refreshment?

Sir Mar. For unavoidable reasons, I must, with thanks, decline your proffered hospitality.

Edith (Aside). Yet he is, in bearing and manners, unmistakeably a gentleman, and, as such, shall and must be respected here. (*Aloud.*) Mr. Puffington, pray be less curious about what does not concern you.

Mr. Puff. Oh, *pardonnez moi*, Mademoiselle! Let me offer this mysterious gentleman my snuff-box.

Impertinently and officiously to SIR MARMADUKE. Perhaps you will try some, Sir, as you will take no other refreshment!

Pushes his box near SIR MARMADUKE'S face.

Sir Mar. No, thank you, Sir.

At the same time he gently pushes the snuff-box back, and in so doing dexterously manages to spill the contents over the shirt-front and face of MR. PUFFINGTON.

Mr. Puff. Zounds! Sir, you are very awkward—very awkward. I declare I must go and get a new ruff and waistcoat.

[Exit in a furious passion.]

Edith. Sir, I regret that this weak-minded friend of my father's has so intruded on you; and you have served the intruder perfectly right. But you seem downcast and dejected. Oh, be not so! Take heart! Surely, as a Cavalier, *your* star will soon be in the ascendant!

Sir Mar. My star in the ascendant? No. Or, if it must be so, it must rise only to lure the innocent and unoffending to their ruin. (*Aside.*) Pure, bright, and angelic being that she is, she little guesses the nature of my fatal mission, of which I even already begin to repent. But necessity is imperative.

Edith (Aside). His words have a strange meaning that I cannot fathom. But I see my father approaching yonder. Your name, Sir?

Sir Mar. Lady, I am called Marmaduke.

Enter COLONEL MORTON.

Edith. Mr. Marmaduke—my father.

Sir Mar. I have come, Colonel Morton, to speak with you on urgent private business. May I solicit the favour of a private interview?

Colonel Morton. Sir, I keep no secrets from my daughter and only child. Whatever concerns *me*, concerns *her*. Speak on, Sir, freely, and without restraint.

Sir Mar. (Aside to COLONEL MORTON). But, if the subject be unavoidably a *painful one*, this lady should be spared the grief.

Col. Mor. I have said, Sir. Speak on.

SIR MARMADUKE *hands him a letter, and, as he reads it, the Colonel becomes agitated.*

Edith. You are agitated, father.

Col. Mor. (*Continuing the reading of the letter.*) Not for my own sake, dear Edith, but for yours.

Continues reading.

Sir Mar. (*to Edith.*) Lady, a few moments since, *you told me*—when you thought me poor and penniless—to take heart; and so do I now tell *you*, gentle lady, to take heart; for, come what may, no harm shall befall either him or you.

EDITH puts her handkerchief to her face.

Col. Mor. But the proofs of this?

Sir Mar. They are here.

SIR MARMADUKE *hands him other documents.*

Col. Mor. In the name of truth, I speak even against my daughter's interest and my own. These proofs are clear, honest, and indisputable. Besides, this decree of the restored King Charles the Second reverses my appointment to these estates by the Protector, Oliver Cromwell. You are the exiled Sir Marmaduke Beauchamp (whom we long thought dead), and I shall not resist your just and equitable claims to the estates and properties of Beauchamp Towers.

Sir Mar. Nobly spoken! Let me be brief. My father perished at Naseby. My mother was driven into exile in Holland, and there she died in abject poverty. On her death-bed she made me vow that I would endeavour to recover my rights. I have fulfilled her wishes. But I little dreamed that it would be at

the expense of your daughter's happiness and your own: I am but a waif and stray—the sole surviving scion of my race. My purpose is accomplished. The remainder of my estates is amply sufficient for my wants. You and your daughter shall retain possession of Beauchamp Towers.

Col. Mor. Most generously spoken. But it must not be. (*Aside.*) Though it is a fearful thing—especially for *her* sake—to be suddenly hurled from the height of affluence into the abyss of poverty. (*Aloud.*) The sacrifice is great, but justice must be done.

Sir Mar. Colonel Morton, your strict sense of justice merits my utmost esteem. Gentle lady, you have won the homage of my respect and gratitude. And I pray you both to give Marmaduke Beauchamp time and opportunity to heal those wounds which he has unintentionally inflicted on your father and on you

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

Position of Characters at fall of Curtain:—

(R.)	(C.)	(L.)
EDITH MORTON.	SIR MARMADUKE.	COL. MORTON.

A C T I I.

SCENE I.—THE DUEL.

An Anteroom in Beauchamp Towers.

Enter CAPTAIN LANGLEY (R.).

Captain Langley. Still rejected in my suit, and sent about my business as if I was nobody. I attribute most, if not all, of this to this adventurer. But I'll soon tickle the ribs of this "hero of romance" with my toasting-fork!

Enter SIR MARMADUKE (L.).

Sir Marmaduke. I am informed that you wished to speak with me. I am at your service.

Capt. L. (Angrily). On occasions like that on which I come, it is usual to depute a friend; but I waive that ceremony, and come in person. I am grossly aggrieved by you with regard to Miss Edith Morton, and I demand immediate satisfaction.

Sir Mar. (Coolly). Pray, be calm, Sir, be calm. I think you are mistaken.

Capt. L. (Excitedly). "Be calm! be calm!" You only add *insult* to injury. I demand satisfaction from an ——— *adventurer!*

Sir Mar. (Coolly). Recall that word, Sir.

Capt. L. (Determinedly). I will not.

Sir Mar. (Coolly). You demand satisfaction? Then you shall have it.

Capt. L. (Excitedly). Where?

Sir Mar. (Coolly). Here.

Capt. L. (More excitedly). When?

Sir Mar. (Coolly). Now.

Capt. L. (Drawing his sword). With all my heart.

Sir Mar. (Coolly). Permit me first to lock the door, lest we should be interrupted—(*locks the door, and writes some lines*)—and also to write a few lines to prevent unpleasant consequences hereafter. Now, Sir, I am ready.

Capt. L. Ready!

Sir Mar. (Coolly). Then begin.

[*They fence. CAPTAIN LANGLEY attacks furiously. SIR MARMADUKE, acting on the defensive only, keeps him at bay, and provokes his fury by acting so coolly. After a time SIR MARMADUKE says, "You are tired, Sir. Rest awhile." They fight again. After a few moments SIR MARMADUKE disarms his adversary, holding his sword against his throat. He immediately drops the point, and hands back CAPTAIN LANGLEY his sword.*]

Sir Mar. Your sword, Sir.

Capt. L. You have acted nobly, Sir Marmaduke. You have scorned to take advantage of me when your superior swordsmanship placed me in your power. Let this contest cease.

Sir Mar. Agreed. I shall give you any explanation you please.

Capt. L. None is requisite. Your word is quite

sufficient. Pray, will you allow me to see the paper that you have written?

Sir Mar. (*Handing it to him*). Certainly.

Capt. L. (*Reads*). "The duel we are about to fight is a fair and honourable one. If the result be fatal to me, no blame whatever is attributable to my adversary. I take the responsibility on myself.—MARMADUKE BEAUCHAMP." Sir Marmaduke, your generosity and noble feelings have converted hatred into the deepest and most sincere esteem. An apology is too little. Will you forgive me?

Sir Mar. Certainly, my dear Captain (*shaking him by the hand*), with hand and with heart; and (*tearing up the paper*) we'll destroy all evidence of this matter and never say a word about it to any one whatsoever. We are both fatigued after our little tournament. I insist on your staying to luncheon. (*Taking his arm.*) Come along, Langley; we'll both find champagne and venison much more digestible than *cold steel*.

Capt. L. I agree with you, Sir Marmaduke

[*Exeunt* (R.).

SCENE II.—“ALL’S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.”

Enter (at top of stage) COLONEL MORTON, leading in his daughter.

Colonel Morton. By the earnest solicitations of Sir Marmaduke, my darling Edith, I bring you to what was once your old, dear, familiar home. Let no considerations of *my* interests weigh with *you*. Be free and uncontrolled. You are as welcome to me in the hour of necessity as when we were prosperous and happy.

Edith. My beloved father!

Col. Mor. I shall leave you here now to your own free choice.

[*Exit (R.)*]

Edith. How shall I act? Perhaps he may think me mercenary if I say “*Yes.*” Perhaps I may be ungrateful, cruel, and—and—untrue to my own feelings if I say “*No.*”

Enter SIR MARMADUKE (L.).

Sir Mar. (Aside). *She is here!* (*Aloud*). Lady, I have solicited the favour of seeing you *here* because *here* I first beheld you, and because *here*, when I was *desolate* and almost *broken-hearted*, your kindly words and womanly tenderness fell upon mine ear as the cool, refreshing rain falls upon the thirsting summer flowers.

Edith. You praise me beyond my merits.

Sir Mar. By no means. I scorn to flatter. More than a year has now elapsed since I *first* saw you, and during all that period you have never been absent from my thoughts; or, if I for a moment forgot you, your dear image was recalled to my mind by the grateful blessings of the poor in this neighbourhood, who still warmly remember your kindly benevolence and unostentatious charity.

Edith. You are *too* good.

Sir Mar. No, lady. Let me speak on. I am not a man of many words. Do not interrupt me; but, I *beseech* you, hear me to the *end*.

Edith. I *will*.

Sir Mar. Here are the two courses. I am the *last* of my race. I have no relative on earth. Even if you reject my appeal, I have already settled all my estates upon *you*. They *are*, and *shall be*, yours *unalterably*. I shall then join the armies that are now fighting in the Low Countries, and, perhaps, perish in battle. My destiny is in *your* hands. Oh! speak the word, dear lady, and—let “*Love* come to the Rescue!”

Edith. Your goodness overpowers me, and my heart bids me say—*I do love you*.

Sir Mar. Heaven bless you, darling! (*Kissing her.*)
Heaven bless you!

Enter COLONEL MORTON (*from top of stage*).

Sir Mar. (*To Col. Morton*). She has crowned me with happiness.

Col. Mor. Then Heaven bless the union! But has the choice been free and uncontrolled?

Edith. The free choice of admiration and esteem.

Sir Mar. Mingled with the *homage* of my *love*.

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

Position of Characters at fall of Curtain :—

(R.)

(C.)

(L.)

EDITH MORTON.

COL. MORTON.

SIR MARMADUKE.

JUST BEFORE MARRIAGE.



A Comedy.

IN TWO ACTS.

OUTLINE OF PLOT.

Raymond Vandeleur is anxious to test the disinterestedness of the love of Florence Evelyn. Being unsuccessful in London, he goes to India, from which he returns *rich*, but he pretends to be *poor*. Florence is still faithful, and, by ingenious and clever artifice, she manages, by pretending to have *excessively extravagant* habits, to frighten away Templeton, whom her guardian, Sir Andrew Billington, wants, as it were, to force upon her,

In her plans she is assisted by Marion Langley, a cousin of Raymond Vandeleur's. Sir Andrew threatens Templeton with "breach of promise." After various events, both Vandeleur and Florence show the innate nobility of their natures by their actions, and all ends in a "happy marriage."

Persons Represented.

RAYMOND VANDELEUR, in love with Florence Evelyn.

WALTER TEMPLETON, Vandeleur's Friend, but, unconsciously, his Rival.

SIR ANDREW BILLINGTON, Guardian of Florence Evelyn.

FLORENCE EVELYN, the Heroine of the Piece.

MARION LANGLEY, the faithful Friend and Ally of Florence Evelyn.

TIME.—The Present Day.

JUST BEFORE MARRIAGE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Public Room in the Grand Hotel at Brighton.

Enter RAYMOND VANDELEUR (R.), *meeting* WALTER TEMPLETON *entering* (L.).

Walter Templeton. What! my old friend, Raymond Vandeleur! (*Shaking hands with him.*) I thought you were still in India.

Raymond Vandeleur. I have only just returned.

Templeton. And you are staying in this hotel, are you?

Van. Yes; I have put up here for awhile to enjoy the fresh sea-breeze, after having been baked like a salamander in the sultry climate of India. England, noble England! London, glorious London! I would rather live in London on a pittance equal to that of the poorest Post-office clerk, than revel in the wealth of a principality on the banks of the Ganges!

Templeton. All a matter of taste, my dear Vandeleur; all a matter of taste. Most men go to India to make money. For your own sake, you have saved some there, I trust?

Van. Confidentially speaking to *you*, Templeton, although the golden fruit of the Pagoda-tree has long been shaken down, I *have*, by fortunate business speculations, saved some money, to the amount of about five and thirty thousand pounds. But I have told this matter to no one but yourself, and I rely upon your word of honour as a gentleman, that you will keep this matter a profound secret.

Templeton. Since you so urgently request it, I give you my word of honour as a gentleman, that I *will* keep this matter a profound secret, under all circumstances. But what, may I ask, is the necessity for all this secrecy?

Van. Perhaps you may consider me whimsical, but I shall endeavour to explain my peculiar position to you as briefly as I can. Before I left England, I had formed a strong affection for a young lady about seventeen, but whose good sense and brilliant accomplishments were infinitely beyond her years.

Templeton (Aside). Oh! infinitely, to be sure!
(*Aloud*). Well?

Van. This dear girl, I had good reason to believe, returned my affection; consequently, I made proposals to her guardian. But they were rejected, because—because I had scarcely any property, and because his ward, on her side, had only a very trifling fortune. What do you suppose I did under these circumstances?

Templeton. Ran away with her, to be sure!

Van. No. Ran away by myself, and left her behind me. By a little interest, I obtained an appointment in

India; and, without taking leave—for that might have overthrown all my resolution—I set sail.

Templeton. Without taking leave?

Van. Without taking leave otherwise than by a letter, which informed her that I was going to endeavour to procure what (if she still continued favourably inclined to me) might remove all objections to our union; but that, although I loved her devotedly, I could not think of putting the slightest constraint upon her actions.

Templeton. Well, and what has happened since?

Van. I have heard from her frequently. But, whenever I wrote, I never acquainted her with my success. In order to test her completely—although I do not doubt her sincerity—I shall tell her that I have returned home nearly penniless. If she accepts me on these terms, I am sure of gaining a deserving heart; if otherwise, I escape a union with an unworthy one.

Templeton. I understand and appreciate your motives, Vandeleur. *Your* thoughts, like my own, are all concentrated on a happy marriage. Consider your secret safe with *me*. But here comes that tiresome Sir Andrew Billington. I don't want to see him at present. Excuse me; we shall speak on this subject again very soon.

[*Exit (R.)*].

Enter SIR ANDREW BILLINGTON (L.).

Sir Andrew Billington. Ha! Vandeleur, my dear Vandeleur! (*Comes up and shakes him by the hand.*) Vandeleur himself! Just returned from India, as I hear. Well, my dear fellow, how *do* you do? Wel-

come home to merry England again! You come, no doubt, abounding—*swimming* in riches! Eh?

Van. Your questions, Sir Andrew, come rather quick upon one another. I can't answer them all in a breath. But I thank you for the gratification you express at my safe return. It would be treason to friendship to entertain the *slightest* doubt of *your* sincerity!

Sir A. Of my sincerity, Vandeleur; doubt of *my* sincerity? Had you come home as impoverished as the tattered lunatic, King Lear, or as poor as Robinson Crusoe on his desert island, my reception of you would not be, in the slightest degree, less warm or friendly—not in the slightest degree, my dear boy, I assure you. (*Shaking him by the hand.*)

Van. I am perfectly convinced of it. We are old acquaintances, Sir Andrew—very old acquaintances.

Sir A. Acquaintances! Friends, friends, Vandeleur! The long-established friendship, the early and close intimacy that has existed between us from your very childhood, can leave you no room to doubt——

Van. The *reality* of what you profess? No, certainly not!

Sir A. No, surely! Does the man deserve to live, Vandeleur, who will desert his friend because he is in need of his assistance?

Van. Yet, unfortunately, such a man is often only too common a character.

Sir A. The villain who could be capable of such baseness merits what is worse than death—everlasting contempt and infamy. But let us change the subject.

Our friend, Colonel Wingfield, has returned from India as rich as a Jew. Has the Pactolian tide flowed in as plentifully upon *you*, Vandeleur?

Van. Not quite.

Sir A. Not quite! Oh! well, nearly so, I hope. Fifty thousand, perhaps?

Van. You are *above* the mark.

Sir A. Oh! Forty, then?

VANDELEUR *shakes his head.*

Sir A. Thirty?

VANDELEUR *shakes his head.*

Sir A. What the devil! Five? Two? One?

VANDELEUR *appears very dejected, and still shakes his head.*

Sir A. What! And have you not brought home even one poor, single, solitary thousand with you, MR. Vandeleur?

Van. Sir Andrew, I went away from this little better than nothing. I have returned here somewhat worse than nothing.

Sir A. (*Aside.*) A pitiful beggar! I must get rid of him as civilly as I can. (*Aloud.*) I pity your misfortunes sincerely, MR. Vandeleur.

Van. My case *is* unfortunate, but still I am not destitute of friends. I have some very sincere ones, Sir Andrew, amongst whom *you* stand foremost. "*And does the man deserve to live who will desert his friend because he is in want of his assistance?*" These are your own words. *Your* interest and connexions, Sir

Andrew, under my disappointments, could surely obtain me *some*, even the *humblest*, situation in the City?

Sir A. Impossible, MR. Vandeleur; impossible, I protest. *My* interest is very trifling, although I really wish I could serve a gentleman like yourself, with whom I have had an *acquaintance* of some standing.

Van. I thought I heard you talk just now, Sir Andrew, of our long-established friendship, of our early and close intimacy.

Sir A. "Early and close intimacy!" Did I say so? No, MR. Vandeleur; I believe you mistake.

Van. Perhaps so, but I *thought* you said something like those words.

Sir A. (*Looking at his watch*). The fact is, MR. Vandeleur, business of great importance calls me away at this moment. Pray excuse me. I shall be glad to see you, MR. Vandeleur, another time. *Au revoir.*

[*Exit* (L.).]

Van. Shallow-minded, time-serving fool! I could laugh now if my indignation did not triumph over my disdain. I pity and despise you! The test proves the *true* gold! Heaven grant that Florence—as I know she will—may emerge from the ordeal pure, noble, and unsullied!

[*Exit* (R.).]

Enter (L.) FLORENCE EVELYN and MARION LANGLEY.

Marion Langley. Still thinking of him, Florence?

Florence Evelyn. Yes; I cannot help it!

Marion. Nor *ought* you to help it, if you could. Under very trying circumstances, you show *true* devotion and a genuine warmth of heart.

Flor. Marion, dear, you must not flatter.

Marion. I scorn to do so! Women rarely praise one another. But when they do so without an *interested* motive, believe me the praise *is* sincere, as *mine* is of you. But a truce to this; let us change the subject. Mr. Templeton is expected here to-day. He comes to seek your hand in marriage; but you do not love him!

Flor. Marion, dear, you know my secret. I do *not* love him. And you also know the almost eccentric conditions of my father's will, according to which I am placed completely in the power of my guardian, Sir Andrew Billington, until a certain period.

Marion. And if you do not comply with his wishes when *two* proposals of marriage shall have been made to you with his sanction?

Flor. Why, then I forfeit the greater portion of my small inheritance, which, in that case, goes to a distant relative.

Marion. Let *me* be your counsellor. You must *temporize*. You have already refused the *first* suitor Sir Andrew proposed. You must keep the *second* "on hand" until you are mistress of your own actions.

Flor. Your *meaning* is good, Marion, but I cannot trifle with *any* man's feelings where such an important subject as "marriage" is concerned. Stay; I have a plan of my own. You will assist me, Marion dear, will you not?

Marion. With hand and with heart.

Flor. You know that my guardian does not approve of Raymond's coming here to visit me, simply for the *worldly* reason that Raymond is poor!

Marion. Yes ; I know Sir Andrew's motive too well.

Flor. Therefore, when Raymond Vandeleur comes, and Sir Andrew or Mr. Templeton is present, you will pretend that your cousin Raymond comes to visit *you*, and not me, and you will act accordingly.

Marion. I will, most certainly. And here he comes.

Enter RAYMOND VANDELEUR (L.).

But there is no need of concealment as yet.

Raymond Vandeleur. My darling Florence (*saluting her*) and my dear cousin Marion !

Flor. Oh ! dearest Raymond, why do you look so downcast ? I know you feel bitterly your want of success in London and afterwards in India. But rouse yourself. Be a man. Face the danger. Persevere and conquer ! Your noble nature *must* not give way before the undeserved misfortunes that surround you. Take courage, and be assured that you *will* be successful. At least, you have my warmest sympathy and my fondest love ; and when the time comes that I shall be my own mistress, you shall see *how* I will act !

Van. (*Aside*). Noble girl ! It is a cruelty on my part to dissemble, but I *must* do so, for a *time* at least. (*Aloud.*) My darling Florence, my thoughts are too full for utterance, but my heart thanks you.

Flor. Enough. I see Mr. Templeton coming yonder. (*Aside.*) This is the time for action, not for sentiment. (*Aloud.*) Raymond, dear Raymond, step aside for a few moments with your cousin Marion.

Marion. Come, Raymond, come aside with me. *I* will explain all, and you can act accordingly.

Van. Cousin Marion, I am completely at your service. Adieu, dearest Florence ; *au revoir.*

Flor. Adieu, dear Raymond ; *au revoir.*

[VANDELEUR and RAYMOND proceed up the stage; and
exeunt (R.). TEMPLETON enters (L).]

Ah, Mr. Templeton, how do you do ?

Templeton. Quite well, I thank you. But I need not ask you how *you* are. You look as bright as a rosebud refreshed by summer rain.

Flor. A truce to your compliments, Mr. Templeton. I believe that you men imagine that we women are mere *dolls*, and not rational beings.

Templeton. For my part, by no means. I come to ask you to name the day that shall make me supremely happy.

Flor. Stay—let me think. I'll speak to you on that subject when I have finished my shopping arrangements. (*Takes out a tablet.*) Let me see. *Monday*, to select silks, poplins, and satins, &c., &c., at Swan and Edgar's ; *Tuesday*, to inspect a pair of ponies at Tattersall's ; *Wednesday*, to choose a pony-phaeton ; *Thursday*, to select a suite of pearls, rubies, emeralds, and diamonds at Emmanuel's. Oh ! of all pleasures in married life, the greatest is that of going out a-shopping *with one's husband !*

Templeton. And leaving *him* to pay, of course ?

Flor. Most unquestionably. And ought he not to be grateful for the privilege ?

Templeton. Well, perhaps so ; for all this folly ceases with the honeymoon.

Flor. Oh, does it? There you are mistaken, in *my* case at least.

Templeton (Aside). She begins to make me uneasy. I fear she's excessively extravagant.

Flor. I must have a horse to ride in the Row in the morning, a carriage and pair and two footmen for the drive in the afternoon, and a box at the Opera every evening. Oh, I must live in one round of pleasure and amusement!

Templeton. But that *round* of pleasure costs a *round* sum of money. (*Aside.*) Hang it! I'm heartily sorry I proposed for her. But how to get out of it with *safety*, that's the question!

Flor. A *round* sum of money! What matter for that? What matter for *money* when *love* is concerned? Now that I think of it, I'll put your devotion to the test. At Emmanuel's in Bond-street there is a ring with a single diamond weighing nearly nine carats; the cost is *comparatively* a trifle—only seven hundred pounds. Bring me that ring, and then we shall talk about naming the happy day.

Templeton (Aside). How exorbitant she is in her demands! She'll drive me mad with her absurd extravagance. (*Aloud.*) But, pray consider the excessive —

Flor. *Love* that you have professed for me. This ring shall be the test of your affection. Bring it to me before the day is over, or never see me more.

Enter SIR ANDREW (L.), *then* L.C.

Sir Andrew (Aside). I heard her asking for the ring—the *marriage* ring, no doubt.

Templeton. Good day, Sir Andrew!

Sir A. What! going already?

Templeton. Yes, pray excuse me; I have business to attend to—an appointment.

[*Exit TEMPLETON hurriedly.*

Flor. I, too, have a letter to write. Good-bye, Sir Andrew, for the present. [*Exit FLOR.*

Sir A. Strange they should both run away like this! Nothing wrong, I hope—a lover's quarrel, perhaps. No matter; I am the master in this affair. Stay; I'll hurry after Templeton, and ask him a few questions.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*A Drawing-room in SIR ANDREW BILLINGTON'S House in Piccadilly. FLORENCE EVELYN and MARION LANGLEY are discovered working at two tables. FLORENCE (R.), MARION (L.).*

Marion. Well, Florence, how did you speed with your importunate suitor?

Flor. Why, tolerably. I drew for him such a picture of my extravagant and expensive habits, that I fancy he begins to dread the *costliness* of marriage. (*Aside.*) No fear of his bringing THE ring, I should think. Sir Andrew's was such a glorious mistake!

Marion. Your manœuvre was a brilliant one, and I have no doubt that you will out-general the enemy.

Flor. Perhaps so. That remains to be seen. Much depends on the chances of war. Oh, marriage, marriage! How remarkable is the fact, that in this, perhaps the most important point in existence, few of either sex can act exactly as they please!

Marion. You are right. The force of surrounding circumstances too often determines the destiny of marriage. The *hand* is too often given where the *heart* cannot accompany it.

Flor. For my part, no matter how great may be the

force of circumstances, I will never marry any other than the man I really love.

Marion. I applaud your resolution. I have explained all to my cousin Raymond; and, with regard to Mr. Templeton, I shall continue to act as your faithful ally.

Flor. Thanks, dearest Marion. (*Aside.*) Poor Raymond! how my heart feels for him under his severe, patiently-borne, but still *unmerited* disappointments! (*Taking out her watch.*) According to appointment, Mr. Templeton will be here almost immediately. Marion, will you keep him in check for me for a few moments?

Marion. Most certainly.

Flor. Thanks, again, dearest. I shall return soon.

[*Exit.*

Marion. I cannot help thinking that Florence is a little too severe on Mr. Templeton. Her noble, disinterested, and passionate love for Raymond Vandeleur altogether blinds her to any good qualities in Walter Templeton. But here he comes.

Enter WALTER TEMPLETON.

Templeton. Good morning, Miss Langley. Delighted to see you.

Marion. Thank you, Mr. Templeton. Miss Evelyn will be here immediately.

Templeton. Delighted to have the opportunity of a few moments' private conversation with you, Miss Langley. In fact, I begin to fear that Miss Evelyn is terribly extravagant.

Marion (*Aside*). Now I must dissemble, for Florence's sake, and act as the faithful ally. (*Aloud.*) I grieve to confess to you that she *is*. She is the best and noblest-hearted creature in existence, but she has one great fault—the most *reckless extravagance*, particularly with regard to dress and jewelry.

Templeton. Ah! I feared so; but proceed, I pray you.

Marion. Her milliner's bills are positively frightful! And for jewelry—well, the least that's said about that the better. But what matter for that? Her future husband will have the pleasure of paying her debts.

Templeton (*Aside*). The deuce he will! Then *I* sha'n't be the happy man. (*Aloud.*) For my part, Miss Langley, I consider economy to be the soul of domestic happiness.

Marion. And so do I, to a great extent. On that point we quite agree.

Templeton. There you show your good sense.

Marion. You flatter me. But I always prefer practical utility. What can be the use of those Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations for *girls*? What is the advantage of cramming their heads with Euclid and Algebra?

Templeton. Precisely so.

Marion. Rather let them stand a competitive examination in the Cookery Book, and answer such questions as these: "Describe the process of making damson jam." "Explain the method of preparing an omelette." "On an average, how many loin chops should go to the

pound?" "Which do you consider—jelly or blanc-mange—the most nourishing; and give reasons for your opinion?"

Templeton (Aside). What a sensible, charming girl!

Marion. But here comes Miss Evelyn. Good-bye for awhile, dear Mr. Templeton.

[*Exit (L.)*.]

Templeton (Aside). "Dear Mr. Templeton," she said. What a blunder I've made in not thinking of such a sensible, economical girl, instead of this fine, dashing, but extravagant young lady, who would ruin me before the end of a fortnight!

Enter FLORENCE EVELYN (R.).

Florence. Well, you have brought the ring? (*Aside*). I hope—I almost know he has not.

Templeton. Please to let that subject rest for awhile. Miss Evelyn, I come to speak to you on matters of graver moment.

Flor. Proceed, Mr. Templeton.

Templeton. Unforeseen circumstances will often interfere with our best intentions.

Flor. (Aside). Heaven grant I may guess aright! (*Aloud*). So much for preface, Mr. Templeton. Now to the subject, if you please.

Templeton. I had flattered myself, my dear Miss Evelyn, with—the hopes of—enjoying the utmost happiness by possessing your hand—but — —

Flor. (Aside). Fortunate beyond my hopes! (*Aloud*). Proceed, Sir.

Templeton. But peculiar circumstances—peculiar and

unhappy circumstances—have since occurred, Miss Evelyn, which—though they run counter to my fondest hopes—yet *must* compel me ——

Flor. Speak the truth boldly. In plain English, you have changed your mind.

Templeton. My dear Miss Evelyn, I assure you that nothing but the most stern and cruel necessity ——

Flor. I understand you, Sir. It is needless to enlarge upon the subject. Suffice it to say that you could not have conferred on me a greater favour than by thus declining a match which, if *you* had not, *I* myself would have broken off before long. And so, Sir, I wish you a very good morning. [*Exit* (L.).

Templeton. If *I* had not, *she herself* would, perhaps, have broken off before long! Absurd! She's vexed at my avowal. I see it. But women are wonderfully quick at turning the tables when this sort of disappointment occurs, just as if the refusal came from themselves. Her pride, however, will prevent the affair from being attended with any serious consequences. But it is by no means necessary, just as yet, that I should meet her guardian, Sir Andrew. Yet, as ill-luck *will* have it, here he comes.

Enter SIR ANDREW (L.).

Sir Andrew. Glad to see you here so early, Templeton. Your punctuality and anxiety do you great credit. Did not I hear her ask you for the ring? The *wedding*-ring, no doubt?

Templeton (*Aside*). Stupid old meddling fool!
(*Aloud*). Sir Andrew—I—I—am anxious ——

Sir A. Indeed, to do Florence justice, your impatience is but natural. She is a young lady —

Templeton. Possessed of most amiable and noble qualities. But, my dear Sir Andrew —

Sir A. I guess what you would say. You want to have a nearer day fixed for the marriage ceremony.

Templeton (Aside). How provoking! (*Aloud*). Pray, Sir Andrew, kindly indulge me while I speak two or three words.

Sir A. Speak on, my dear fellow; twenty, thirty, forty—as many as you like.

Templeton. Sir Andrew, you have done me great honour in accepting my proposals for your ward.

Sir A. Don't mention it, my dear fellow; don't mention it. You have your heart's content now, and I sincerely wish you joy. (*Shaking him by the hand.*)

Templeton (Aside). What a pest he is! (*Aloud*). But hear me, Sir Andrew. Circumstances—peculiar, *unfortunate* circumstances, over which I have no control—have since occurred—which—render it impossible for me to fulfil my engagement to Miss Florence Evelyn.

Sir A. Oh! that alters the case! Zounds, Sir! what *do* you mean by such conduct? Do you think I will hear it? You mistake your man, Sir. The days of duelling are past, or I would call you out on the spot! But the *law* affords a remedy, Sir. (*Pacing to and fro across the stage excitedly.*) The *law* affords a remedy. “Breach of promise,” Sir; “breach of promise!”

Templeton. "Breach of promise!" Ah! I quite overlooked that. And now I am involved in a new and unexpected difficulty. What shall I do?

Sir A. Yes, Sir; "breach of promise"—a very flagrant "breach of promise." (*Pulling out a number of letters from his pocket-book, and putting on his spectacles.*) Here are a few of your letters, Sir, addressed to myself on the subject: "I propose for the hand of your ward." "Will you consent to give her to me, &c.?"

FLORENCE, MARION, and RAYMOND enter at back of stage (L.).

Florence. Come, Marion, bring Mr. Raymond Vandeleur with you. I wish to show you both the beautiful flowers in my conservatory. [*Exeunt (R.)*].

Sir A. Yes, Sir, we shall have sweeping damages against you for breach of promise of marriage.

Templeton (Aside). What shall I do? I am between two fires! I must either consent to be reduced to bankruptcy by an extravagant wife, or to be utterly ruined by an action for breach of promise. My mind is made up! (*Aloud.*) Sir Andrew, your ward has just passed round to the conservatory. Recall her, pray.

Sir A. I will. (*Aside.*) I'm glad to see that he's returned to his rational senses. All by *my* management—all by *my* clever and skilful management. (*Aloud.*) Florence, my dear, be kind enough to come to me. I want to speak to you.

Flor. (Within). I hear you, Sir Andrew; I shall be with you instantly.

Comes in (R.) and proceeds (L.).

Sir A. (Aside). What will he do now, I wonder? I've frightened him!

Position of Characters:—

(R.)	(C.)	(L.)
TEMPLETON.	SIR ANDREW	FLORENCE.

Templeton. My dear Miss Florence Evelyn --

Sir A. (Aside). That's a good beginning.

Templeton. Unforeseen circumstances obliged me to discontinue my suit, but equally unforeseen circumstances now enable me to renew it.

Sir A. (Aside). That's right. The *second* equally unforeseen circumstances are—a wholesome dread of sweeping damages for breach of promise.

Templeton. Therefore, my dear Miss Evelyn, I humbly hope that you will again allow me to solicit the honour of your hand.

Flor. Oh! you've changed your mind again?

Templeton. I have.

Sir A. (Aside). She'll jump at him—she'll jump at him.

Flor. Sir, you are mistaken in your estimate of our sex. This morning you requested me to consider your proposal cancelled. You would accept me this evening because you are afraid of damages for breach of promise. Under such circumstances I consider that the renewal of your offer amounts almost to an insult.

Templeton (Aside). This is awkward, to say the least of it.

Sir A. But you *must* marry him. Your father's will gives *me* the disposal of your hand up to a certain period.

Flor. That word *must*, Sir Andrew, should, under such circumstances, never be used by a gentleman to a lady; and with regard to the period of bondage to which you allude, it expires this very day.

Sir A. (Aside). Oh! I quite forgot that!

Flor. And even if that probationary period had not now expired, I *would*—no matter what the consequences might be—have refused this gentleman's suit. I did all in my power to make a refusal, if possible, come from *his* side, and, by alarming him with regard to my *imaginary* expensive and extravagant habits, I succeeded.

Templeton (Aside). Strange and incomprehensible woman!

Sir A. But you must have had some further motive?

Flor. I had. I am not ashamed to avow it now. To reserve my hand for the only man I ever truly loved—
[*Enter* RAYMOND VANDELEUR (*at centre door*) with
MARION LANGLEY.]

Raymond Vandeleur!

Vandeleur (Aside). Her dear words to *me* are most delicious music! Noble, generous being!

RAYMOND VANDELEUR and MARION LANGLEY *advance a little from centre door down the-stage.*

Sir A. Florence, you are mad. Vandeleur is a beggar! He's returned from India without a shilling.

Flor. I know it, and therefore I prize him more;

because, though persevering, industrious, noble, and honourable, he has been *undeservedly* unfortunate.

Sir A. Your girlish fancy renders Vandeleur a hero of romance. I tell you, he's only a penniless beggar.

VANDELEUR *steps forward* (C.).

Van. Stay, Sir Andrew; the prospect is brighter than *you* imagine. To put *your* friendship to the test, and to give my noble, generous Florence an opportunity of *proving* her disinterested affection, I stooped to a concealment of my success.

Sir A. Bless me! I've made a mistake.

Van. As you usually do, Sir Andrew. Selfishness overreaches itself. But I forgive you. Templeton, you have honourably kept my secret, although you knew not that Florence was my affianced bride.

Templeton. Vandeleur, I have acted thus because I consider you to be a noble, straightforward, and honourable man.

Van. Thank you, Templeton; and, although you have been disappointed in *one* quarter, I think I can guess *where* you might be successful. I know a certain lady who appreciates your good qualities—my gentle cousin Marion.

Murion. Cousin, you should not betray *my* secret.

Templeton (to *Marion*). He does it with a good intention only.

Van. But come, my gentle cousin, give him six months' probation; and, if he proves himself worthy, perhaps we shall have a *second* "happy marriage."

Templeton. I agree to the compact.

Marion. And so do I.

Van. That's satisfactory. And now, my darling Florence, I have concealed my circumstances from *you* in order to test your affection.

Flor. Could you doubt it?

Van. No. But still I wished to fully prove the disinterestedness of your love; and you have come forth from the ordeal as pure and unsullied as gold from the furnace. In pecuniary affairs I have been fortunate beyond my most sanguine hopes, and have already accumulated more than five and thirty thousand pounds!

Sir A. (Aside). Bless me! what an ass I've been in not cultivating his acquaintance, instead of abusing him as a pauper!

Van. And now, dearest Florence, permit me to convert jest into earnest. (*Presenting a ring to her.*) Here is the diamond ring to which you alluded.

Templeton (Aside). The diamond ring! This is cutting *me* out with a vengeance.

Flor. But oh! I never intended. The cost—seven hundred pounds!

Van. I know you did *not* intend. The cost is nothing, compared with the priceless value of *your* love. Take it, dearest Florence. It was the first means of driving my friend and rival from the field; let it be now the auspicious omen of our approaching union.

Flor. As the latter, I accept it thankfully and gratefully. (*To the others.*) We all are friends, now; are we not?

Marion. }
Templeton. } We are!
Sir A. }

Marion (Aside to Sir Andrew). What would have been the case, Sir Andrew, if my cousin Raymond had landed in England "as impoverished as the tattered lunatic, King Lear, or as poor as Robinson Crusoe on his desert island?"

Sir A. (Aside to Marion). Oh! don't allude to it— don't allude to it, I beg of you; it's a sore subject.

Templeton. And now, Vandeleur, I, your friend, and formerly, *unconsciously*, your rival, sincerely congratulate you on your double success.

Van. I thank you warmly.

Flor. And so do I.

Templeton. And I sincerely wish you —

Marion and Sir A. As we all wish you —

Templeton, Marion, and Sir A. As we all wish you —

Templeton. A *Happy Marriage.*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

Disposition of Characters at fall of Curtain:—

	VANDELEUR.	SIR ANDREW.	
TEMPLETON.	FLORENCE.		MARION

BEYOND HIS INCOME.



A Comedy.

IN THREE ACTS.

OUTLINE OF PLOT.

George Danks, a farmer's eldest son, has, by will, the choice of the farm or twenty-five thousand pounds in cash. Being of an ambitious disposition, he determines to accept the money, leaving the farm to his brother Reuben. He goes to London; marries a fine lady, Clara Vere de Vere; changes his name to Hauteville, and enters upon "fast" life, incited thereto by Capt. Maxwell, a rejected suitor of Clara de Vere. Maxwell, from motives of revenge, leads Hauteville into a course of dissipation, which ends in his spending all his money, and committing forgery. The Captain also makes overtures to Hauteville's wife. Reuben Danks, who has been despised by his grand relatives for his rustic manners, rescues his brother from ruin; and sad experience teaches Mr. and Mrs. Hauteville that true friendship, however humble, is preferable to the hollow and interested flattery of aristocratic acquaintances.

Persons Represented.

REUBEN DANKS, a Farmer.

GEORGE DANKS (afterwards HAUTEVILLE), his Brother.

DUDLEY MAXWELL, a Fashionable Villain.

CAPTAIN LASCELLES, }
MAJOR VESEY, } Men about Town.

CLARA VERE DE VERE (afterwards Mrs. HAUTEVILLE).

SUSAN BELFORD (afterwards Mrs. DANKS).

MRS. SOLVENT, a Friend of Mrs. HAUTEVILLE.

SARAH, Servant to Mrs. HAUTEVILLE.

Footmen, Peasants, &c.

TIME.—The Present Day.

BEYOND HIS INCOME.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—THE FARM OF HAPPY VALLEY.

A Harvest Home. Labourers, Reapers, &c., discovered drinking at tables spread in front of the Farm-house.

Enter REUBEN DANKS (R.C.), then R.

Reuben. Friends and neighbours, ye be heartily welcome at our Harvest Home in the old Farm of Happy Valley. Make merry, my friends, and enjoy yourselves.

Peasants, &c. We will, Maister; and mony thanks to you.

Reuben. Good friends and neighbours, don't thank me alone, but also thank my brother George. Surely, you haven't forgotten him?

1st Farmer. By no means, Maister Reuben. We haven't forgotten Maister George, nor all his kindness.

Reuben. I be heartily glad to hear that, good friends and neighbours. (*Aside, at C.*) Oh, George, George! if you only knew how truly the poor folks here *do* love you, you'd soon give up your high-flown notions, and settle down with me quietly as a farmer in our dear old home.

Enter SUSAN BELFORD (L.).

Reuben. Ah! Susey, darling! I be right glad to see thee.

Susey. And I, too, to see thee, Maister Reuben.

Reuben. Maister Reuben! Oh, Susey! Call me Reuben—plain Reuben. Don't forget that you and I are goin' to be married. But what about my brother George? His head's quite turned with readin' novels and romances, good fellow though he is.

Susan. Oh, yes; he be always a-readin', and in search of what he calls "romantic adventures."

Reuben. So he be—so he be, Susey. And between you and me, Susey, he's actually dared to raise his eyes to Miss Clara Vere de Vere, of the Grange!

Susan. Bless me! Them novels has put strange and outlandish thoughts in poor Maister George's head.

Reuben. They have, Susey; they have. But when, Susey, darling, will you appoint the wedding day?

Susan. Maister Reuben, it rests with *you* alone.

Reuben. "Maister Reuben!" Oh, Susey! don't call me that again. Call me, as I said before, Reuben only. [*A crash is heard without (R.).*] But what was that? Something must have happened.

[*Peasants, &c., all rush up the stage, and look out eagerly (R.).*]

1st Villager (Returning). There has been an accident! But here comes Maister George, Miss Clara, and a strange gentleman.

Enter CLARA DE VERE (R.), supported by GEORGE DANKS and DUDLEY MAXWELL.

Clara. Thanks, my warmest thanks, Mr. George. I am better now.

George. The lady is faint and exhausted. Bring a chair, pray.

[*A chair is brought. She sits down (C.). REUBEN and SUSAN stand (L.), GEORGE and MAXWELL (R.).*]

Clara. Thanks again, kind friends. I am better, far better, now. But the accident was a fearful one. The ponies I was driving became restive at the edge of the cliff overhanging the sea, and galloped to the precipice. This gentleman, Mr Maxwell, who accompanied me, contrived to save himself and (*sarcastically*) appeared to leave me to my fate.

Villagers. Shame! shame!

Maxwell. My good friends, will you be good enough to make a little less noise? My ears are not accustomed to this bucolic roar.

Reuben. Silence there, my lads! Let's hear the lady. Quiet there, Jemmy. Have you no manners, Mike? Let the lady speak.

Clara. At the critical moment this brave young man (*pointing to GEORGE DANKS*) dashed forward, heedless of danger and of his own safety, and seized me in his arms as the pony-chaise was just falling over the precipice! It was a fearful, an awful moment; but his powerful grasp tore me away, while the chaise and the ponies were hurled hundreds of feet downward on the sharp-pointed rocks!

Villagers. Hooray! Maister George. Hooray! We be all proud of you. Hooray!

George. Thank you, my friends. I only did what *any* man ought to do—what any of *you* would have done—under the circumstances. But Susey, my dear, cannot you offer Miss de Vere any assistance?

Susan. You will come within for awhile, Ma'am, will you not?

Clara. Thank you very much. I will for a few minutes.

[*Exit CLARA (L.), led out by SUSAN. Villagers proceed up to top of stage, and MAXWELL exit (R.) at top of stage.*]

Reuben (to GEORGE). A word with you, brother George. You be a *noble* fellow, though your ideas be summat too high-flown for such folks as *me*.

George. What do you mean, Reuben?

Reuben. You be disinclined to work at the farm. You don't look after any of our village lasses, but you must be liftin' your eyes to such fine ladies as Miss Clara de Vere!

George (Impatiently). Well, Reuben, where's the harm? It's enough to me that it is my business, not yours. Don't trouble yourself any further on *that* subject, please.

Reuben. All right, George, I won't! That's flat. But now, about our father's will. He has left twenty-five thousands and this farm, giving *you*, as the *elder* son, the choice whether you will take the twenty-five thousand pounds in hard cash or the farm of Happy Valley! He

gave you six months to decide, and the time is just up. You've touched a little of the cash from our lawyer; so I can guess which way your thoughts lie.

George. The coin, by all means, Reuben; the coin. The twenty-five thousand pounds, my boy. Reuben, you can have the farm—I aspire to *higher* things! I want to *distinguish* myself, and to make a name in the great city! That's my line of country. I prefer the £ s. d.

Reuben (Aside). I am only a simple, ignorant man; but still I can imagine the terrible risks that he will run! He's like a moth, a silly moth, fluttering round the flame of a candle. He doesn't dream of the dangers that await him! (*Aloud.*) Here comes Miss Clara.

Enter CLARA (L.), led in by SUSAN.

Clara. I am quite recovered now. A glass of spring-water and a little of your delicious milk have quite set me up.

Susan. It was just out of the cow, Ma'am.

Clara. Thanks, Mr. Reuben, thanks; and my warmest thanks to you also, Miss Susan.

Susan. Oh! you have nothing to thank *me* for, nor any of us, Miss Clara. Surely we are all only too happy to see you look like your own bright self again!

Enter MAXWELL (R.).

Max. And may *I* also claim forgiveness?

Clara. Perhaps you may, Sir. Your very opportune, but not compulsory, self-removal from the vehicle when it was on the point of falling over the precipice, was merely the result of accident. I congratulate you

on your presence of mind. We must charitably suppose that you meant well. But (*to GEORGE*), my generous preserver, I can never thank *you* sufficiently. I am going to London, Sir. My guardian lives in Piccadilly, and both he and I shall ALWAYS be most happy to see the gentleman to whom I am indebted for the preservation of my life.

George. I am deeply grateful, and shall avail myself of your kind and flattering invitation. Believe me, I thank you sincerely. The trifling service I have had the honour of rendering you scarcely merits *such* thanks as you have given me.

Max. (Aside). Have I a rival in the field? The fellow has come in for some property lately, I hear. Perhaps he can be induced to live *beyond his income!* These new men generally go ahead a little. Some ready cash will be acceptable to me. I'll play with him. All is not lost yet. Clara has too much taste to care for the agricultural division. It is not good form.

Clara. Come, Mr. Maxwell; we must be going. My guardian will be uneasy at my prolonged absence. Good-bye, my friends. I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you all very soon again. But if I might express a wish —

Susan. Pray do, Ma'am. Anything that the farm can afford, or that we can do, shall be at your service.

Clara. I see that I have intruded upon a scene of merry-making. If you would favour us with a song, I should be delighted.

Reuben. Do, Susey. You can oblige the lady if you will.

Max. Charming idea ! There is nothing so touching as a pastoral ditty. Peasants always go down at the Opera.

Susan. Well, Ma'am, to oblige *you*, I don't mind if I do ; but it's only a little thing. The words are not much, and as for my singing, I can't boast of much voice. (*Sings.*)

OUR HAPPY HARVEST HOME.

I.

The golden wheat is waving
Beneath the balmy gale ;
The tuneful birds are singing
Adown the flow'ry vale.
Sons of the soil,
Suspend your toil
While mellow Autumn glows ;
Seek while ye may,
On this bright day,
Contentment and repose.

CHORUS.

Seek while ye may
On this bright day,
On this bright day,
Contentment and repose !

[*They dance while singing.*

Come along ! Come along !
With the dance and the song.
Come along ! Come along !
With the dance and the song.

Drawing Room Dramas.

Where'er thro' life we roam,
 Beneath the greenwood tree,
 We'll keep thus merrily
 Our happy harvest home.
 Our happy,
 Our happy harvest home.

II.

I love the em'rald meadow,
 Adorn'd with bright Spring flow'rs,
 And rich, *fruit-laden* orchards,
 In Autumn's golden hours !
 May Heav'n bless
 With happiness
 Where'er thro' life ye roam,
 Sons of the soil,
 Your manly toil,
 Your happy harvest home.

CHORUS.

Seek while ye may
 On this bright day,
 On this bright day,
 Contentment and repose !

[They dance while singing.]

Come along ! Come along !
 With the dance and the song.
 Come along ! Come along !

Where'er thro' life we roam,
 Beneath the greenwood tree,
 We'll keep thus merrily
Our happy harvest home.
 Our happy,
 Our happy harvest home.

Max. Capital, upon my word! A rustic Patti!
Quite an undeveloped genius.

Reuben. After that, if I may be so bold, I will call
upon you, Miss Clara.

Clara. And not in vain. I will endeavour to please
you as far as I can, since Susan has been so kind. I
always like to see people happy, and to contribute as
far as I am able to their merry-making. But after
Susan's excellent singing, you must not be critical.

CLARA (C.) *sings* :—

OUR QUIET COUNTRY HOME.

I.

I *would* not, if I *could*, forget,
 Tho' far away I roam,
The friends I leave with fond regret,—
 Our quiet country home!
For here have flown those tranquil days
 That time can ne'er restore,
And each dear scene that meets my gaze
 Recalls the past once more.
 The past—
 The happy past once more!

II.

And still, tho' parted, far away,
 My fondest hopes shall dwell,
 Unchangingly, from day to day,
 O'er scenes I love so well.
 Nor *time* nor *distance* can divide,
 Where'er thro' life I roam,
 Those friends that are my hope and pride,
 Nor our lov'd country home.
 For here have flown those tranquil days
 That time can ne'er restore,
 And each dear scene that meets my gaze
 Recalls the past once more.
 The past—
 The happy past once more !

Reuben. Thanks, Miss Clara. You always were obliging. There is not another like you in the country side. And now, lads, if the music will strike up, we'll give them a bit of a dance at our harvest home.

[*Dance of Peasants.*

[*Exeunt* CLARA and MAXWELL (R.). Villagers, &c., retire (R.) and (L.).]

George. Reuben, as I told you before, I also am going to London.

Susan (Aside). I'm sure he's smitten with the bright eyes of Miss Clara !

Reuben. Well, then, go, George. May you prosper, and be fortunate. Avoid living beyond your income. But whatever turns up, whether you be rich, or you be

poor, you will *always* be welcome here in the cottage where we were born, and on our poor dear old father's farm of Happy Valley.

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

Position of Characters :—

(R.)	(C.)	(L.)
REUBEN.	GEORGE.	SUSAN.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Under the Trees in Hyde Park.*

Enter CAPTAIN LASCELLES (R.), *meeting* MAJOR
VESEY (L.).

Las. Well met, Vesey; haven't seen you for an age.

Vesey. No; I've been abroad. Is anything stirring? Has anyone we know smashed up? Have you heard of anyone running away with somebody else's wife?

Las. No; everything is as flat as water. I shall give up London in despair soon. There is nothing new in "our set." But, now I think of it, there *is* something worth relating. A mushroom has come to the surface; in fact, a rich country bumpkin has made his appearance—a Mr. George Danks. In order to raise himself in the world's estimation, the fellow has changed his plebeian name—"Danks"—into that of Hauteville.

Vesey. By Jove! Perhaps he is worth looking after. Can he play cards, or rather, can't he? You know, if a fellow wants to get into society, he must pay for the introduction! We ought to cultivate his acquaintance.

Las. By all means. But Maxwell has him in tow. They say that there is a little revenge lurking under his friendship. The mushroom has cut him out with a lady he was spoony on. This George Danks, or George

Hauteville, has supplanted him in the affections of Clara Vere de Vere—you remember her, she was out two seasons ago—to whom he has now been six months married.

Vesey. The usual thing, my dear fellow. All girls go in for money now. Blood and Norman names have quite gone to a discount. I can go back to Rufus, and there is not a girl who will look at me on my half-pay.

Las. A runaway match, I hear; “all for love,” and the usual three-volume-novel sort of bosh!

Vesey. Take my word for it, Lascelles; she married cash, and not the mushroom; and I should not be surprised if she still secretly liked her old flame, Maxwell!

Las. Nor would I, either. But, by George! here they come. Talk of the ——, you know! Let us stand aside a moment!

Enter (L.) MAXWELL and HAUTEVILLE, arm-in-arm.

Max. Expensive, do you say, Hauteville? Not a bit of it. The horses are quite a bargain.

Haute. Oh! if *you* say so, it *must* be all right. I'll buy them.

Las. (*Aside to VESEY.*) Hear that? He has his tight enough. Case of spider and the fly!

Max. Glad to see you take my advice, old fellow. You stick to me; you won't go far wrong.

VESEY and LASCELLES come forward.

How do, Lascelles? How are you, Vesey? I didn't see you at first. Allow me to introduce Mr. Hauteville; Captain Lascelles, Major Vesey—both old friends.

Las. Delighted to make your acquaintance, Mr. Hauteville.

Vesey. Delighted, I'm sure. (*Aside.*) A spoony-looking sort of fellow; just the sort of pigeon I should like to pluck. It won't be long before he joins the hard-up division. He's in good hands.

Haute. Thank you, gentlemen. If you are not otherwise engaged, will you favour me with your company at dinner this evening?

Las. Ah, well! Though I was going out of town to-day, I think I'll drop in on you.

Vesey. I am going to a ball at Lady Storkington's to-night, but shall be happy to accept your invitation to dinner.

Haute. Thank you, gentlemen. I shall expect you.

Max. Now that you have got the horses, Hauteville, I shall not be satisfied until I see you a member of the Four-in-Hand Club!

Haute. That's all very well, but look at the expense.

Max. Oh, hang the expense! It only comes to keeping *four* horses, instead of two. There will be an outlay on the drag, to be sure—yet it will always fetch money, if you want to sell it.

Haute. What will a drag cost?

Las. Of course, you wouldn't think of buying one bran-new.

Vesey. No; of course he wouldn't!

Haute. Oh, of course not.

Vesey. No one does, now-a-days.

Haute. Indeed!

Vesey. Yes; it's just one of those chances which a man meets with only once in a lifetime. You have heard of Barrington, have you not?

Haute. Yes; I think the name is familiar to me.

Max. To be sure; every one knows Barrington. Used to be one of the fastest men about town. Well, he is gone to the dogs; mortgaged his estates up to the very hilt, and hasn't got a penny!

Haute. Bless me, what a sad thing!

Max. All his own fault. He went the pace too hard.

Vesey. His drag is to be disposed of by private contract. I could get it a bargain. (*Aside.*) And make something for myself, too, by a little double-dealing.

Haute. Well then, Major Vesey, we'll talk of the terms after dinner.

Las. Meanwhile, let us have a game of billiards at my club. (*Aside.*) A few fivers knocked out of the mushroom would be a great accommodation to me at present:

Haute. With pleasure. I am not a good player, but know how to knock the balls about.

Las. Oh! I daresay you can handle a cue as well as any of us.

Max. (*Aside.*) These fellows may be useful for my purpose, but hang me, if they shall have much out of my man! I found him, and I'll ruin him in my own way. (*Aloud.*) Time flies, gentlemen; come along. I hear my trap in the road. [Exit (R.).

SCENE II.—*A Drawing-room in HAUTEVILLE'S House.*

MRS. HAUTEVILLE and MRS. SOLVENT are discovered seated (R.) and (L.) respectively.

Mrs. Solvent. Well, my dear Clara. You had a very pleasant dinner-party last night!

Clara. Yes; but I don't like those half-pay officers George brought home with him. He sat up gambling with them until a late hour, and lost large sums of money.

Mrs. S. I must confess, my dear, that I've a slight weakness for dress and jewellery; but I detest the absurdity of losing money at cards, and all that sort of thing. It makes me very wretched.

Clara. I quite agree with you.

Mrs. S. You will excuse me, darling, for leaving you so abruptly. I have some important business to see to before one o'clock.

Clara. Oh, certainly. Pray, don't mind me.

Mrs. S. Good-bye, dear Clara, good-bye!

[*Exit* MRS. SOLVENT (L.).]

Clara. Good-bye. I greatly fear that Hauteville is not half so sensible and careful as he ought to be. But I will not let him touch a penny of *my* money, all of which, thank goodness, is settled on myself.

Enter SARAH (L.) with a number of parcels.

Sarah. A packet of jewellery, Ma'am, from Bond Street, and another from Regent Street.

Clara. Very well. Take them into my dressing-room, please.

Sarah. Yes, Ma'am. [Exit SARAH (R.).]

Enter HAUTEVILLE (R.C.).

Haute. Ah! Clara dear. You were up early this morning. You do more of the early bird business than I feel inclined for. Wake at twelve, and have a soda and B.; that's my form.

Clara. Yes, I should think so. You stay up late. What can you expect? I am afraid you lost money, too.

Haute. What does it matter, my pet? Don't be cross! One must live fast in this locomotive age, and I try to be kind to you.

Clara. I shall give you an opportunity of proving that kindness (*pulling out a number of tradesmen's bills.*) These *must* be paid to-day. Let me see—here's a milliner's bill, 132*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.*; another milliner's, 57*l.* 9*s.* 8*d.* Ah! this, too, is a milliner's—325*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.* Then, here is a butcher's, a baker's, and I don't know what besides—quite a heap of them; with a few other miscellaneous trifles, all of which will probably amount to six hundred or a thousand pounds, I haven't counted them; it is great trouble doing sums. Give me a cheque for a thousand, George, and (*coaxingly*)—and I'll say that you are a dear, good fellow, after all.

Haute. (*Aside.*) I thought that I had been extravagant enough myself, but *this*, hang it all! this is extra-

vagance, and no mistake. (*Aloud.*) Suppose I haven't got the money?

Clara. Haven't got it? What nonsense! Surely you're jesting.

Haute. The fact is, Clara dear, I have got in with a fast set. My friends are all reckless and extravagant men, and I am unfortunately just beginning to discover that I have—"lived beyond" my income. But, however, I have strength and energy, and I'll make it all right. Meanwhile (*writing a cheque*)—here is your cheque, Clara, for a thousand pounds (*handing it to her*).

Clara. Dear old boy! You always were a good fellow. Our married life was a very happy one until ——

Haute. (*Kissing her.*) My darling! no reproaches. I can't bear that. Don't worry! There is not much harm done yet.

Enter a Servant (L.).

Servant. A telegram, Sir.

Haute. (*Opening it, and after reading it*) That will do, John. You may go. Bless me, Clara! this telegram is dated yesterday, and it informs me that Brother Reuben and his wife are coming up to town to-day, to pay us a visit.

C'ara. Oh! good gracious! How dreadful! Only think if Lady Theresa were to find *them* here! And her ladyship is to call at one to-day, to take me in her carriage to a morning concert at the Hanover-square Rooms!

Haute. That's awkward! She would chaff; and so would Vesey. I expect him and another fellow about the same time. What are we to do?

Clara. Say we are out. We must stand upon our dignity. If we once associate with such people, we shall lose caste.

Haute. (a little angry.) You seem to forget that, after all, Reuben is my brother!

[A knock is heard at the hall-door. HAUTEVILLE runs to the window.]

Clara. You must entertain him. I will not. I emphatically refuse to recognize a farmer!

[Exit (R.).]

Enter a Footman (L.).

Footman. Are you in, Sir?

Haute. N—n—no!

[Exit (R.).]

Reu. (Without.) Not in! I know better. Well, if he isn't, I'll wait for him. Come along, Susey; we'll have a rest after our plaguey long walk. Maybe, his foine wife is within.

[Enter (L.) REUBEN DANKS and his Wife. The Footman (as it were) retreats before them.]

Reu. Here we are at last. Hey, man! what are you looking at? How you do stare! I be your master's brother, and not a hippopotamus, or any other wild animal. Here's half-a-sovereign (handing him money). Keep seven and sixpence for yourself, and out of the remainder get me a quart of the best ale, for I'm as dry as chips.

Foot. (Aside.) Well, he's a queer customer, and I scarcely know what to do! Better say I'll go. (Aloud.) Beer, did you say, Sir? Yes, Sir, immediately.

[Exit Footman (L.).]

Reu. Hey ! But this be a foine place, Susey !

Susan. It be ! But who's to pay the piper ?

Reu. Hold on there, Susey. We maun go no further. It's no business of ours.

Enter GEORGE at door (C.).

Reu. (*Addressing GEORGE.*) Hey ! lad. The fellow downstairs said you were out ; but "No," says I, shaking my head, "in my opinion, it's a horse of another colour." You see, I've been to the Cattle Show, and as the Missus wanted a bit of an outing, we took it into our heads to come over and gi'e you a call.

Haute. You're very kind, I'm sure. I was beginning to wonder what had become of you.

Susan. Didn't you know where to find us ?

Reu. No, no, lad ; you don't throw dust in *my* eyes. You're too fine for us, with your new-fangled ideas. But where's your foine wife ? Won't *she* see us, and give us a word of welcome ?

George. Mrs. Hauteville is indisposed.

Reu. Is that polite English for "she won't see us" ? Never mind ; I suppose, when you've had your fit over, you'll come to your senses, and be plain George Danks again.

Haute. Really, John, you are overstepping all the limits of courtesy.

Reu. Why can't you say you want us gone ? Come on, Susey, my lass ; we'll be makin' tracks for home.

Haute. You'll have something before you go ; a glass of wine or a bottle of beer ?

Reu. (*Indignantly.*) Not us ! If *you* had been at the

old farm at Happy Valley, it would have been on the table, without any asking. No, lad ; I've got a little six-pence in my pocket, and the wife and I will have a glass together at the first public we meet. Fare thee well, George. Don't thee burn the candle at both ends, and don't thee live *beyond your income*.

[*Exeunt* REUBEN and SUSAN (L.).

Enter CLARA (R.).

Clara. Are they gone ?

George. Yes !

Clara. You seem annoyed.

George. I *am* awfully annoyed. I can't explain how I feel now ; so I shall take a turn somewhere. Back to dinner. [*Exit* (L.).

Clara. Oh ! Good-bye. Gracious me ! what a worry it is to have low connexions ! Oh ! I should have fainted if Lady Theresa had come in, and found the beast here.

Enter MAXWELL (L.).

Max. Ah ! Mrs. Hauteville, glad to see you at home. I have been so bored in avoiding George's vulgar relations, whom I met in the street.

Clara. Sit down, Mr. Maxwell, pray. I am quite alone. [*They sit.*

Max. Mrs. Hauteville—*Clara*, as I used to call you—have you so completely forgotten old times, that you say “ Mr. ” and not *Robert Maxwell* ? You know, we were *engaged* before you met with George —

Clara. I remember it but too well.

Max. But you cut me because *I* was *poor*, and you

accepted *him* because *he* was *rich*. Now the tables are turned. My uncle has died recently, and has left me two thousand a-year; and your husband has not only lost all he ever had, but he is also desperately in debt.

Clara. I am very glad to hear of *your* good fortune. But the reverses which you tell me have befallen George completely astonish me.

Max. It is perfectly true, I assure you, as you will soon find out to your cost. At this crisis, will you listen to me? You know, I once loved you deeply, warmly, passionately! You are married to a man who is not your equal. Clara, I still love you. Cannot you return my love? Fly with me!

Clara. (*Rising angrily*.) Mr. Maxwell, you forget yourself. This language is unpardonable. It is cruel of you to insult me so grossly. If George is ruined, he is *my* husband. Dare to say *one* word more to *his* dishonour or to *mine*, and I will *at once* denounce you to him!

Max. Perhaps you are right; I may be wrong. If so, it is the fault of my love for you. Why are you so lovely? But if you are prudent, you will say nothing of this. Your husband is *completely* in my power. If you provoke me, I can—well, I will not shock you by saying what I can do.

Clara. (*Aside*.) I begin to understand the position. Duped, deceived, betrayed by *him*. If this be the case, to save George, I *must* temporize. (*Aloud*.) Whether I shall tell my husband or not, depends upon your conduct in the future, Mr. Maxwell. Your threats have

little weight with me. If he has done wrong, he must pay the penalty. I wish you good morning.

[*Exit (R.)*.]

Max. Rejected, by Jove! She's a splendid creature! How well she did it! I did not expect to win at the start, though I don't consider myself out of the hunt yet. I have all the cards in my hand, and must score in the end. I have promised myself to be revenged on her, and not only on her, but on her clodhopping husband. Proud and haughty as she is, I will have her at my feet.

Enter GEORGE HAUTEVILLE (L.)

Ah! George, glad to see you.

Haute. So am I to see you. I am in a deuce of a fix; confidentially speaking, I'm regularly cornered. To confess the truth to you—I've been living far "beyond my means."

Max. A very bad game to play. (*Aside.*) It's what I've been doing all my life.

Haute. Maxwell, you have always been my friend.

Max. I hope so.

Haute. You have just come in for some money. I want you to lend me a couple of thousand pounds.

Max. A couple of thou., my dear boy! A couple of thou.! It's a pot of money. You forget that I have to trust to the Jews. My right to the property is still disputed. If I had the ready tin, I would do it in a moment.

Haute. Delay will ruin me!

Max. I will set my wits to work, and see what can

be done to serve you. Stay—I have it. For our mutual advantage, George, we must draw a bill, which shall be accepted by you.

Haute. I will accept anything, from a promissory note to a Government appointment. But, seriously, who will do my paper?

Max. Who will melt it? Under *present* circumstances we could not get our own discounted. I haven't flown a kite for years. I don't know any one who would do a bit of stiff for either of us. For a *temporary* accommodation, what do you think of your *brother's* name instead of your own? He has a large account at the London and County.

Haute. I am a very bad "man of business," Bob. I don't quite understand bill transactions. Wouldn't people call it forgery?

Max. By no means! The bill will be cashed at once, and *I*, even without *your* assistance, can take it up long before the three months expire. I have a stamp in my pocket, as it happens. Put your brother's name to it.
[*Handing him the bill.*]

Haute. I suppose there's no harm. It's only bridging over a temporary necessity. You will see it all right. There!
[*Signing it.*]

Max. That will do. (*Aside.*) Landed! I shall have no difficulty now in carrying out my plans.

Haute. Just pardon me a minute, while I write a letter, will you?
[*Sits down and writes.*]

Max. Oh, certainly; don't mind me. (*Aside.*) But now, to complete my revenge, I must leave a letter I

have here, addressed to Clara, in such a position that her husband may be sure to find it. I'll drop it here. [*Drops a letter near GEORGE'S chair.*] (*Aloud.*) Good-bye, old fellow! ta ta! I won't interrupt you. I shall see you again soon.

Haute. Good-bye, Maxwell! You'll excuse me, I know; as I'm writing to catch the post.

Max. Don't mention it. [*Exit (L.)*].

George. *Au revoir.* [*Rising.*] Now my letter's finished! Oh! how heart-sick I am at my accursed folly and infatuation! It is too late—too late, now! This remorse is terrible. Ruin—utter ruin—stares me in the face! I see now what a fool I've been. What's this? [*Picking up the paper.*] Merely some paper I must have dropped. Good God! A letter addressed to Clara from Maxwell! Under *such* circumstances, to *read* this letter is *not* dishonourable. I *will* read it! [*Reads.*] “My own darling Clara,—You know I have loved you long and fervently. If you will consent to fly with me to-night, wear the diamond snake bracelet on your left arm this afternoon, when I shall call again.—Ever yours, devotedly, ROBERT MAXWELL.” My wife was here just now; she must have dropped it. Has it, then, come to this? My wife untrue to me, and I betrayed by the very man in whom I reposed the utmost confidence! At length the truth dawns upon me! Maxwell is a treacherous and deceitful scoundrel! I can call him nothing else. I'll quickly settle my account with him! And, as for her— But here she comes. Her shawl is on her left arm, so that I cannot

see whether she wears the snake bracelet or not. If she does, she is guilty; if not, I shall hold her acquitted.

Enter CLARA (R.).

Clara. George, dear, you seem agitated.

Haute. I am a—a little out of sorts.

Clara. Have courage, dear — be a man! Don't allow money matters to bother you! It will never do to confront danger with despondency!

Haute. It is not *ruin* that I fear! I dread *dishonour*!

Clara. Dishonour! What do you mean?

Haute. A few moments may, perhaps, make my meaning clear to you. Clara, let me take your shawl! It is hot, quite hot, here!

Clara. How strange you are! On the contrary, I feel cold. [*She gently removes her shawl.*]

George (Aside). The bracelet! God help me! The snake bracelet! (*Violently.*) You thought to deceive me, but I have found you out! I am not the fool you take me to be! That look of innocence will not help you! You wear the sign of consent—the bracelet upon your left arm! [*Seizes her violently by the arm, and casts away the bracelet.*] Read! read this letter! You must have dropped it by accident! But your guilt is discovered, and your sin has found you out!

Clara. George, are you mad? Listen to reason, I implore you! This is some revengeful scheme of Maxwell's to ruin both me and you. Oh! George, my husband! Appearances *may* seem against me; but hear me—oh! hear me! I have been foolish and extravagant but I am *not* the guilty thing that you think me.

Haute. Oh! would to Heaven that I *could* believe you!
But the damning evidences are too strong.

Clara. Oh, George, George!

Haute. Not a word! Here *he* comes.

Enter MAXWELL (L.).

Max. I have just been endeavouring to cash the bill,
but ——

Haute. How cool you are!

Max. I always take things coolly. What's the
matter now?

Haute. Consummate scoundrel! You cannot be
ignorant.

Clara (interrupting). Sir, you have done me a deep
wrong. My husband has found a letter addressed by you
to me, of which I know nothing. I demand an instant
explanation. If you have a spark of gentlemanly or
honourable feeling, you will at once exonerate me.

Max. I have no explanation to give. The letter speaks
for itself. But your husband may put what interpretation
upon it he pleases. A little indignation is all very well, but
don't carry the thing too far. As for *you*, Sir, remember
that you are completely in my power. I hold the *forged*
acceptance you gave me when you wrote your brother's
name upon a bill stamp. If you wish to appear at the
Old Bailey, and obtain a notice in the "Newgate
Calendar," I can have no possible objection.

Clara. Oh, George, be cautious! You are in the
power of a villain. Do him no harm.

Haute. Nothing on earth shall save him. He shall
not play with me.

[*Dashes at* MAXWELL.

Max. Take care, my good fellow! Two can play at that game. Mind what you do.

Haute. What do I care, so long as I have revenge for your duplicity. Mind yourself. It is your life or mine!

Clara. Oh, help! help! Something dreadful will happen. Help! help! He is mad!

[*They struggle together, and at length GEORGE succeeds in throwing MAXWELL out of the window, and at the same time a great crash of glass is heard in the conservatory beneath.*]

Haute. That last throw did it. I've settled him. He's quiet for awhile, at all events! (*Aside.*) And now for her, even though my heart may break.

Clara (*falling on her knees*). Oh, George, do not look so wild! You frighten me. He is justly punished. But, oh! spare and pity me, for I am guiltless!

Haute. (*sinking into a chair* [*C.*].) I will not harm you. We must part. There is an end of everything between us now. Go away—for ever!

Clara. George, George! You cannot mean it. What have I done? This is too cruel! You will kill me!

Haute. Go! My folly will bring its punishment. Leave me. Ruin I *could* have borne; but when you are faithless—you, for whom I have sacrificed everything—I cannot bear it. Go! Not another word; I'll not hear you.

Clara. Oh, God! He is killing me; my heart will break. This is too much. Oh, my heart! I—I cannot.

[*He bends down his head on the table, and she swoons by his side.*]

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

ACT III.

THE RETURN HOME.

SCENE.—(*Same as Scene I*).—*The Farm of Happy Valley.*

Enter REUBEN and SUSAN (L.).

Reuben (R.). Well now, Susey, my lass, ain't we more happy here, in our quiet country farm, than many of the great folks up in the "big city?"

Susan. Oh, yes, Reuben. Though *I do* dealy love to go up to Lunnon for a while to see the Cattle Show and the theatres, and I dearily love the cows, and the sheep, and the pigs. Oh, the dear pigs! There is sweet music in a pig's grunt, Reuben. Yet, after all, I loike much better our quiet, comfortable country home. Oh my! how quickly the time goes, to be sure! Now I must busk about, and look to the cows and the calves, and the dairy and the pigs. Bless their hearts, all of them!

[*Exit SUSAN (R.).*]

Reuben. Bless thee for a good-hearted, thrifty housewife! I wish our George wouldn't be such a confounded Jackass, though my heart feels for him, poor fool! (*Taking out his watch.*) The time's nearly up now. He'll be here almost immediately—at least, if

this letter says right. I hear a footstep! I shouldn't wonder if 'twere he. Yes; here he comes!

Enter GEORGE (L.).

Welcome home, George. You are heartily welcome *home*, if you don't mind the sound of that dear old word!

George. Brother Reuben, I have a great deal to thank you for. How I can ever thank you sufficiently is more than I know. When I, in a moment of madness, put *your* name to a bill, and was on the brink of being arrested in accordance with the plans of a villain, *you* nobly came to the rescue, paid the money, and freed me from danger and disgrace. There is my hand, brother. Can you take it, after all that has happened? I am an altered man now, although the change comes a little too late in the day.

Reuben (*giving* GEORGE *his* hand). There, brother George, don't take on so. You mustn't be down-hearted! Believe me, your father's son is not goin' to desert his own brother. But tell me what happened after that villain Maxwell's last visit to your house.

George. For a while, his guilt seemed to prosper; but his sin at last found him. While out hunting, he was thrown from his horse. The horse rolled over him, and the injuries were so dreadful, that the most skilful London surgeons at once pronounced that there was no hope whatsoever of his recovery.

Reuben. One would almost be tempted to say 'twas a just retribution.

George. But remorse prayed upon him. Before he

died, he caused this confession to be drawn up—(*showing* REUBEN *a paper*)—in which he acknowledges his own guilt, and *fully and completely* frees my unhappy wife from any blame whatever.

Reuben. Well, at least the attempted atonement is good.

George. Ay! it may be so. But it will not bring back to me that poor, wronged, unhappy being who has disappeared, gone no one knows whither! Oh, God! in the heat of my rage how cruelly I wronged her!

Reuben. Tears, brother George, tears! Come, come, be a man. (*Aside*). His grief affects me a little. (*Aloud*). Have you not sought for her?

George. Everywhere, and by every means that human imagination *could* suggest, but in vain.

(*A tumult is heard without.*)

A Voice Without. Help! help! Bring the drags! This way! this way! A sudden squall has upset a boat upon the lake, and a man and a woman are clinging to it! Help! help!

Reuben. And the lake *is* a dangerous place, too. Why, it was only about a year ago that another boat upset there, and three persons were drowned!

George. Oh! Reuben, my brother. This is a time for *deeds*, not *words*.

[*Rushes out* (R.) *at head of stage.*]

Reuben (C.). George is a noble fellow, and he is going to save these poor, drowning creatures, even at the risk of his own life! But he's a strong swimmer.

As for *me*, I can only dive like a stone. But the crowd is increasing yonder.

[*Proceeds to head of stage.*]

1st Peasant (without). Bravo, Maister George, bravo! Strike out again! She's sunk down there below!

2nd Peasant (without) See, he dives like an otter!

3rd Peasant (at head of stage). They've disappeared again! Oh, they'll all be drowned!

4th Peasant (at head of stage). No, no! See, Maister George is rising to the surface, and he bears the woman in his arms!

1st Peasant. I knew he would. Nothing can beat his pluck!

Reuben (Aside). Hooray! I feel proud of him, in spite of all his faults. He has been misguided, but he's a brave and noble-hearted brother!

Enter SUSAN (L.).

Susan. O Reuben! Reuben! George has saved one life at least!

Reuben. Thank Heaven for that! I always said he was a brick. Bravo, George! Hooray!

Susan. And see, Reuben; he is bringing the poor woman this way. Poor woman, did I say? No, by her dress and movements she must be a lady.

[*Enter GEORGE (R.), supporting in his arms a female, whose face is covered with a thick black Maltese veil.*]

Susan. Poor lady! Let me tend her.

Reuben. Good again, brother George. See to the lady, Susey, darling. Your good, kind heart will soon invent a means of bringing her round.

Susan (removing the veil). Bear up, Ma'am. It's nothing, after all. Stranger though you be, you are welcome here. What do I see? George, 'tis your wife.

George (staggering back). My wife! Good God! can it be? Yes, 'tis Clara! Clara—my own darling—my much-wronged wife!

Reuben. Then Heaven be praised!

Clara. O George, George! Saved, and by *you!* I seem to be awaking from a terrible dream to a bright vision of future happiness. George, I knew that—though unjustly—you still believed me *guilty*; and while that cruel suspicion hung over me I determined to remain in secrecy till time should prove me innocent.

George. O Clara, Clara! How cruelly I have wronged you!

Clara. Say not so, George. We have both been the unsuspecting victims of a villain.

George. But on his death-bed he has confessed all.

Clara. He has; and, as some reparation, he sent that confession to me also; I received it from my father's hands. Then, hearing that you were coming here, in my haste to reach you, I avoided the road which leads round the lake, and, taking a shorter course, crossed over in a sailing boat. A sudden squall overtook us, and, had it not been for your devoted courage, my dearest George, I should never have seen your face again!

Reuben. Think not of the past, sister-in-law. Poor George is sorry—very sorry—for doubting you even for a moment.

Susan. And so he is, poor fellow; and so we all be.

Clara. Thanks, dear, kind friends—thanks.

George. O Clara, Clara, *can* you forgive me?

Clara. Most certainly, from my very heart, my dearest George. But to all here my debt of gratitude still remains unpaid. Reverse of fortune has taught me a wholesome lesson. George was too foolish and generous; *I* was too proud and haughty. We both have learned to value true and genuine friendship. And all is *not* lost. “The Grange” and five hundred a-year, settled upon myself, is mine. I give it freely to my beloved George. Stay, George, as you love me, speak not! And Susan, my sister, and Reuben, my brother-in-law— No! I will not say that. Reuben, my noble fellow—George’s brother and mine—you and my sister Susan shall always be welcome there.

Susan. We wish nothing better than to be with you. As our parson says, you have been sorely tried in the fiery furnace of affliction, but you have proved yourself to be true gold.

George. Now, dearest Clara, I can thank Heaven for the supposed misfortunes that have befallen me in living *beyond my income*. For had it not been for that fault, I never should have known the value of your true and most devoted love.

Reuben. All is not lost when honour is saved. And now for another secret, which you all may hear. Come nearer, my friends and neighbours. [*They gather round.*] Though until now I’ve concealed it from you, George, according to our father’s dying injunction. He, bein’

a very prudent man, was always afraid that you would be led astray if you ever got up to town; and at his death he set aside five thousand pounds for *you* in trust with me until you should have had experience of life in London.

Neighbours. Hoorah! Hoorah!

George. Much experience, though bitterly purchased, has taught me many great and wholesome lessons—to despise the hollow flattery of the world, to warmly esteem the homely but generous friendship of you, my dear Susan—of you, my generous brother; and last, but not least, the fond and disinterested affection of a true, forgiving, and devoted wife, whose worldly failings have faded away like summer mists before the morning sun, and whose sterling good qualities are only more fully shown in the brilliant light of the freshly-dawning, golden day!

Reuben. We'll tap a cask of ale to-day, and the best sirloin of beef the village can provide shall be set on table.

1st Peasant. Hoorah! We'll drink his health with a one, two, three!

2nd Peasant. And as there is not much time to lose, let's have it now. Take the time from me, my lads. Hip, hip, hip, hoorah! [*Peasants shout.*]

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

Position of Characters at fall of Curtain:—

Peasants.

Neighbours, &c.

GEORGE. CLARA.
(R.) (R.C.)

REUBEN. SUSAN.
(L.C.) (L.)

TAKEN BY SURPRISE;

OR,

LOVE AND JEALOUSY.

A STORY OF MONMOUTH'S REBELLION, 1685.

IN TWO ACTS.

OUTLINE OF PLOT.

ACT I.—Ralph Martyn, a farmer, is vexed because his rival, Walter Howard, is preferred by his sweetheart, Janet Sedley. Ralph endeavours to excite Walter's jealousy. News arrives of the defeat of the Duke of Monmouth. Captain Garnett (one of Monmouth's officers) has been attached to Lady Florence Herbert, to whom Janet was waiting-maid; Captain Garnett has given presents to Janet, and Walter is of a suspicious disposition. The Captain escapes from the battle, and Janet, in endeavouring to conceal him, has a conversation, which, by means of Ralph's ingenuity, Walter overhears; and, in revenge, Walter fetches the soldiers of Kirke, who arrest (at the place of *rendezvous*) the Captain and the *supposed* Janet. But it turns out that the woman is *not* Janet, but Lady Florence, who is assisting Captain Garnett to escape.

ACT II.—Walter, discovering his mistake, resolves to make atonement. By bribery he gains admittance to the Captain's dungeon. He ultimately persuades the Captain to change clothes with him and to escape. Walter is discovered, and is led out to execution, and Captain Garnett, having been unable to obtain aid, surrenders himself as a substitute for Walter. Immediate execution of *all* is ordered, but a reprieve and pardon arrives in the nick of time, by means of the exertions of Florence.

Persons Represented.

CAPTAIN GARNETT, an Officer in the Duke of Monmouth's Army (in love with LADY FLORENCE HERBERT).

WALTER HOWARD, a Farmer (in love with JANET SEDLEY).

RALPH MARTYN, the Villain of the Piece (also in love with JANET SEDLEY).

LADY FLORENCE HERBERT (in love with CAPTAIN GARNETT).

JANET SEDLEY, formerly Waiting-woman to LADY FLORENCE HERBERT (in love with WALTER HOWARD).

ALICE THORNTON, Aunt to JANET SEDLEY.

COLONEL KIRKE, Officers, &c.

TAKEN BY SURPRISE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Country Scene, with a Farm-house or Cottage (L.); a Bridge near back of Stage; and door leading into barn (R.).

Enter ALICE THORNTON (L.).

Alice. Surely these are troubled times, and when the great folks go to war with one another, the poor folks also have to suffer for it. The soldiers have been marching about here this morning, and they've quite upset the whole place, in their search after the *rebels*, as they call them. (*Aside.*) But who comes here? Why, Ralph Martyn, to be sure. I never could bear even the very looks of that man.

Enter RALPH MARTYN (R.).

Ralph. Good Morning, Mistress Alice, good morning. There's a startling piece of news to-day!

Alice. What is it?

Ralph. The carrier brought it this morning. (*Approaching nearer to her.*) The Duke of Monmouth has been defeated at Sedgemoor, and those of his army that have not been destroyed are closely pursued by Colonel Kirke.

Alice. Oh! these wars! these horrid wars! And, worse than all, when Englishmen, that should be brothers, rise in arms to slaughter one another!

Ralph. True, but it's not the poor alone that suffer. I'm told that Captain Garnett was one of the leaders of the defeated party, and that he was one of the first killed in the battle.

Alice. Killed! My poor dear old master's son killed! Then there'll be another death to follow, for I know that that poor dear young creature, Lady Florence Herbert, to whom the Captain was to have been married, will never survive the news!

Ralph. But there *is* one who *will* be glad to hear it.

Alice. There you speak falsely. Who could be so base as to rejoice at the death of such a noble-minded gentleman as Captain Garnett?

Ralph. Walter Howard will be glad to hear it; for when your niece, Janet Sedley (his bride that is to be), was waiting-maid to Lady Florence Herbert, Walter was very jealous of the Captain, because he gave Janet presents.

Alice. Ralph Martyn, you were always a mischief-maker—even from your very cradle! Captain Garnett is a man of honour, and Janet is as pure as the driven snow! But the secret is, you are *mad* because she refused *you* in marriage, and preferred Walter. You know that Walter's jealousy is easily excited; but yet, with all his faults, poor Walter is as true as steel!

Ralph. Perhaps what you say is true.

Alice. Perhaps what I say is true! You may thank

your stars that Walter's not here, or I'd get him to horsewhip you!

Ralph. Good day, Mistress Alice, good day. You're on your stilts now; you're in your tantrums. Good day, good day. *[Exit slowly (L.).]*

Alice. What a provoking wretch that man is, to be sure! He's always creating some disturbance or another. But who comes here?

Enter CAPTAIN GARNETT (R.), disguised as a waggoner.

Captain Garnett. Be there an inn near here, mistress, where a tired wagg'ner can get somewhat to eat and drink?

Alice. No. There's no inn here, my good man; but, if you wait, you can have a good glass of home-brewed ale, and something to eat with it, too, and nothing to pay.

Capt. G. Thank'ee, mistress, thank'ee. *(Approaching nearer, and speaking in a low voice.)* What, Alice! don't you know me?

Alice. Bless me! I know your natural voice now, Sir! Do you think that I could so easily forget my poor dear master's son? But are you wounded, Sir? Oh! be cautious; keep your disguise. You have dangerous enemies.

Capt. G. My wounds are trifling. But there's not a moment to be lost. The King's troops are in hot pursuit, though they're off the track at present.

Alice. But, my darling young master, we can conceal and shelter you!

Capt. G. What! who comes here?

Enter JANET (R.).

Alice. It's only my niece Janet, whom you know. Janet, my dear, there's no time for explanations now. This is Captain Garnett, just escaped from the great battle at Sedgemoor. We must conceal him here for a short time. Will you aid us?

Janet. With hand and with heart, aunt.

Enter on a bridge above, RALPH (L.), *accompanied by*
WALTER.

Capt. G. In token of gratitude, my dear girl, allow me to take your hand.

[*He holds her hand, and appears to continue speaking.*]

Ralph (*Aside, to* WALTER). See how gladly she takes his hand. *He is a gentleman, you are only a poor man.* Perhaps she feels the pressure of *his* hand more warmly than she would that of yours.

Walter (*Aside, to* RALPH). Silence, Ralph; or you will drive me mad with jealousy.

Capt. G. (*Aloud, to* JANET). Shall it be so?

Janet. It shall be exactly as you wish.

Walter (*Aside*). Oh, Janet! Janet! How could you so basely break your plighted faith?

Alice. Time wanes, Captain. Tell Janet what to do, and she will do it. I go to prepare provisions for you.

[*Exit* ALICE (R.).]

Janet. That I will, Captain, for my poor dear young lady's sake; for I know that she loves you, Captain, from her very heart.

Capt. G. Thanks, thanks! Then you *will* go to her. Say to her ——

Ralph (*Aside, to WALTER*). They are speaking louder now. Listen.

Walter. It's mean to listen, Ralph; but where treachery is afoot, diamond must cut diamond.

Capt. G. (*speaking louder, and again taking JANET'S hand.*) Say to her (*raising his voice*), we shall meet at the stile leading into Oaktree-park, an hour hence.

Ralph (*to WALTER*). Do you hear, Walter? Do you *see*, Walter? You thought me your jealous enemy; you shall now find me your truest friend.

[*CAPT. GARNETT and JANET appear to continue speaking.*]

Walter. Pardon, me, Ralph! I *did* distrust you, but I was wrong in doing so. Poor Janet! poor Janet! I pity your delusion, but I *will* be revenged on *him*.

[*Exit WALTER, led out by RALPH* (L.).

Re-enter ALICE (R.).

Alice. All is prepared. Now, Janet, dear, the sooner you go to meet Lady Florence the better.

Janet. I shall go, dear aunt, this moment.

Capt. Gar. Lady Florence herself must thank you, Janet, for such a kind and noble act, and ——

[*Exit JANET* (R.).

Alice. Stop, Captain! The time is far too precious for you to indulge in speechifying, and, besides, Janet is gone. [*Opening door* (L.).] You will find refreshments inside. I shall leave you now, lest suspicion might be excited, if we were seen here. God bless you! God bless you!

[*Exit ALICE* (L.).

Capt. Gar. God bless both of you, for your kind and warm-hearted feelings! What strange things *do* turn up in life! Here is my dear old nurse giving me food and shelter, and here also is her niece going on an errand of mercy to her whom I had fondly hoped to make my bride. But why should *I* complain of *my* condition? Why, in comparison with the fate of those who have been killed, or whose families have been rendered desolate and homeless by this unhappy civil war, my lot is fortunate indeed! Civil war is the cruellest of all evils that can befall a country. It slays the fathers—makes the wives widows, and renders the children orphans! But now for my place of concealment.

[*Exit through door* (L.).

Re-enter ALICE (R.).

Alice. He is safe, and in good time, too; for the King's soldiers are not far off, and I dread the lurking cunning and the treachery of Ralph Martyn. But I will trust Walter with this secret; and I know that *he*, poor, honest, noble-hearted fellow that he is, will aid us in securing the Captain's escape to France.

[*Exit* ALICE (L.).

Enter LADY FLORENCE (R.), accompanied by JANET.

Lady Florence. And his place of concealment is here. Oh! Janet, dear, how kind of you to come to me so speedily in this hour of trouble!

Janet. Lady Florence, there is nothing so very extraordinary in an act of respect and esteem. I have known you too long to shrink from you in the hour of danger or distress.

Lady Flor. Thanks, my dear Janet! Thanks—from my very heart! But, give the signal!

[*JANET advances to the door, knocks three times, repeating the words—“The coast is clear!” The door opens, and CAPT. GARNETT comes out.*]

Capt. Gar. My beloved Florence! You have made good speed, thanks to yourself and our kind friend, Janet Sedley.

Lady Flor. Oh! my dear cousin, there is no time to waste in useless words. Your life is in danger, and you *must* be saved. My uncle, General Wardle, is, most unfortunately, absent in the north of England; but you know that he approves of our union. You appointed to meet me at the stile this evening, almost at this very hour. Swift horses await us there, and, by relays, we shall proceed to London, and thence embark for the Continent, until these unhappy times are over. Now, Janet, dear, pack our valises, and meet us at the stile as speedily as possible.

Janet. Lady Florence, I shall not lose one second.

[*Exit JANET quickly (L.)*].

Capt. Gar. My beloved, how true and devoted you have been! In times of peace, it is almost impossible to estimate a woman's value; but, in the hour of danger, distress, or suffering, her real merit appears in its true colours. In times of peace, we see but the gilded surface; in times of war and danger, we men behold in women the pure and unsullied gold!

Lady Flor. Think of your safety first; and (*laughing*) of your fine speeches more anon. But (*seriously*) time

presses. The stile is near. Swift horses are in readiness.

[*She draws her hood over her face. They proceed up the stage. As they approach the stile, the way is barred by a file of soldiers, accompanied by RALPH and WALTER.*]

Commanding Officer. Not so fast, if you please! Soldiers, secure your prisoner!

[*CAPT. GARNETT is "taken by surprise." LADY FLORENCE swoons, and throws herself into WALTER'S arms.*]

Walter (raising her hood). What! Merciful Heavens! Not Janet, not Janet! Then I have been deceived! I have wronged the innocent, and my foolish jealousy has ruined all!

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Interior of a Prison.* CAPTAIN GARNETT discovered, seated at a table (R.), with pen, ink, and paper before him, not writing, but gazing on the ground with a look of great misery.

[*Time, Twilight, gradually darkening.*]

Capt. G. Betrayed! basely betrayed! and by a man whom I have never injured, either in thought or deed! Yet I think not of my own fate. My very heart bleeds for my poor beloved Florence. May Heaven, in the hour of her distress, pity and befriend her! But who comes here?

Enter WALTER (L.), disguised as a Labourer.

Walter. I've walked all the way from Gloucester, Sir, to see you.

Capt. G. Thanks, my friend, a thousand thanks! Surely you bear a message from Lady Florence Herbert?

Walter. No message.

Capt. G. What! None! What brings you here, then?

Walter. With great difficulty, and with some bribing too, I've gained admission here. I see, you don't recognize me, Captain Garnett: and it's no wonder, for I en-

deavoured to disguise myself so completely that I might be utterly unknown. [*Taking off his slouched hat, and approaching the prisoner, who looks at him again attentively.*]

Capt. G. What! Villain! Do you *dare* to come here and lock me in the face, after your atrocious treachery?

Walter. I acknowledge that I deserve all that you say against me, but I come for—your rescue!

Capt. G. Villain! You have some other motive. Be warned before it is too late, and leave me before harm comes to you.

Walter. Hear me, Captain Garnett, and when you have heard all, condemn me if you will! The time that I am allowed to remain here is too short, or I might *prove* to you, Captain, that your death could neither benefit nor gratify me. But to the purpose. You and I are nearly of the same size. The clothes which disguised *me* can disguise *you* also.

Capt. G. (*Aside.*) What does he mean?

Walter. Change clothes with me, and you may depart freely and unrecognized. In the darkness of the cell, I shall remain undetected by the gaolers, at least until you have time to place yourself beyond their reach.

Capt. G. You speak calmly and deliberately, but you *amaze* me so much that I can scarcely understand your meaning.

Walter. Captain Garnett, there is no time to lose. For both our sakes decide *at once*.

Capt. G. What! Would you urge *me* to escape and to leave *you* in my place to suffer punishment?

Walter. Yes!

Capt. G. This is incomprehensible! You urge me to escape! What induced you to betray me?

Walter. There is no time for explanation now. It was a fearful, terrible mistake. I beseech you, change clothes with me.

Capt. G. Oh! Walter, Walter! It is I that have mistaken you. Forgive me, Walter, and—leave me to my fate. I cannot purchase my freedom at the cost of your life!

Walter. Then I will remain, and we will both perish together. For both our sakes, I beseech you, take these clothes and go. If you escape, there will be time to rescue me.

Capt. G. (*Aside.*) Would that I could think so! There will not be time, I fear, to bring help and to rescue this noble fellow, if he takes my place.

Walter. Captain Garnett, the time allowed me here has almost elapsed. You will now have only a few seconds to exchange clothes. I ask you, once more, Will you be free, with a possibility of rescuing me; or will you sacrifice your own life and mine, from a mistaken notion of honour?

Capt. G. (*Aside.*) What shall I do? This is the moment for decision. Delay would ruin all! (*Aloud, taking WALTER'S hand.*) My noble-hearted friend, I accept your generous offer. From the moment of regaining my own liberty, I shall devote myself, heart and soul, to obtain yours. I have friends who will help us, if I can only reach them in time!

Walter. Oh ! be quick, Captain ; be quick !

[*They rapidly exchange clothes. Immediately after the gaoler enters (L.).*]

Gaoler. The time is up.

[*CAPTAIN GARNETT leaves the cell with him, and WALTER seats himself in the darkest corner.*]

SCENE II.—(*Time, Morning*). *Any Country Scene that leaves a Stage with an open space will suit this.*

Enter JANET (L.), and ALICE (R.), meeting.

Janet. Oh! Aunt dear, I scarcely know what to think of all that has happened since last night! Have you heard the news?

Alice. No, Janet, dear; pray tell me.

Janet. Walter, in atonement for his almost fatal mistake, has taken the place of Captain Garnett in his prison. But the murderous Colonel Kirke has discovered all, and—oh dear, Aunt Alice!—they say that poor Walter will be led out to execution here, this morning. My heart will break—my heart will break! Walter has proved himself to be a noble-hearted fellow. If *he* must die, *I* will perish by his side, and his murderers must slay me also.

Alice. Courage, my own darling Janet, courage! Lady Florence Herbert posted off with swift horses, yesterday, to the King himself, and *she* may bring a pardon!

Janet. It will come too late, dear aunt, it will come too late. Hark! Already I hear the measured tramp of armed men!

[*Within, a bugle sounds “The Assembly,” and a voice exclaims, “Soldiers, bring out your prisoner!”*]

Janet. Oh, aunt dear ! I shall die with terror !

Alice. (*Taking her hand.*) Courage, my darling. Let us retire here.

[*JANET is led to (R.) by ALICE.*

Soldiers enter (L.C.) with WALTER as their prisoner.

COLONEL KIRKE, accompanied by RALPH, stands (C.), Soldiers (R.) ; and WALTER, handcuffed, is placed (L.).

Kirke. (*Savagely.*) Prisoner, prepare for instant death !

Walter. Surely, you will not slay me so suddenly ! But I understand it all now ! I see by your side that false friend and that unforgiving enemy, Ralph Martyn.

Ralph. (*Sneeringly.*) Dear me ! how cross and unkind you are, Walter ! But I tell you to your face that I *hate* you ! Janet shall *never* be your bride, and she shall slumber in *my* arms when you are lying in your *cold and silent grave* !

Janet. [*Rushing forward from her place of concealment at (R.)*.] Wretch, and malignant monster ! May the false and lying tongue that utters those inhuman words be struck dumb, and paralyzed ! [*She throws herself into WALTER'S arms.*]

Kirke. Drag her away ! Tear them asunder ! Soldiers, do your duty ! [*The soldiers endeavour to part them, but JANET resists.*] They shall both die together, then ! But whom have we here ?

CAPTAIN GARNETT *rushes in (R.C.)*.

Capt. Gar. Colonel Kirke ! for Heaven's sake, call off

your soldiers, or you will have the blood of an innocent man and unoffending woman upon your head!

Kirke. What! more interruption! Knock down that brawling fool, I say! [*The soldiers approach CAPT. GARNETT, but he keeps them at bay with his drawn sword.*] Disarm him, I say! [*He is overpowered and disarmed.*] Now, place him side by side with that stupid idiot who took his place in the prison, and with that absurd mad woman who refuses to be parted from ——

Ralph (ironically). Her dear and affianced husband. Janet! Janet! *you* shall be punished too!

Janet. Inhuman monster! Yet the glory of dying by the side of such a noble-hearted gentleman as Capt. Garnett, and in the arms of my beloved husband that was to have been, makes me almost forget your fiendish malice!

Kirke. Proceed with the execution. By Heaven! there has been too much delay already! Soldiers! again I say—Make ready! Present! [*Soldiers present their muskets.*]

Janet. Forbear! for mercy's sake—forbear! I hear the galloping of horse, and—hark! a trumpet sounds in the distance! I see, in the distance, a woman on a snow-white steed; and a cavalier, on a raven-black charger, is fast spurring by her side!

Kirke. Soldiers, obey *my* orders only! [*The soldiers appear to hesitate.*] Heed not the frenzied appeal of a mad woman!

A Voice (from within, sounding from the distance at first, and gradually becoming louder). Forbear! forbear! forbear! In the King's name stay the execution!

*Enter (R.C.) a CAVALIER, leading in LADY FLORENCE
HERBERT.*

Cavalier. In the King's name, stay the execution!

Kirke. What means this intrusion?

Cavalier. Your King's express command! Here is his sign manual—look at it! [*Shows it to KIRKE.*] Obtained by this noble lady by exertions which almost cost her her life. Here also is the King's free and unconditional pardon to all who were concerned in his escape. Prisoners, arise! You are free!

[*They throw themselves into each other's arm CAPTAIN GARNETT into LADY FLORENCE'S, and WALTER into JANET'S.*]

Capt. Gar. (*To LADY FLORENCE.*) My brave-hearted, noble girl! how can I and they ever sufficiently thank you?

Lady Flor. By not thanking me at all for what was merely my duty.

Capt. Gar. Heaven bless you, love! Heaven bless you!

Cavalier. But all is not ended yet. Here also is a warrant for the apprehension of a double-dyed traitor—Ralph Martyn. Soldiers, seize your prisoner!

Ralph [*seized, and being led off (L.)*.] What! Foiled, baffled, and defeated! Caught in my own trap. Curse you—curse you all! [*Exit (L.), led off by soldiers.*]
Exeunt KIRKE, &c.]

Capt. Gar. (*Advancing to WALTER.*) Walter, my good and faithful friend, never again let unfounded

jealousy interfere with love. In Janet you possess a noble treasure.

Walter. As you also, Captain Garnett, possess in your noble-minded bride, Lady Florence Herbert.

Flor. (stepping forward.) Who merits no such praise. But now, thank Heaven, all ends in harmony and love.

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

Position of Characters at fall of Curtain :—

WALTER

CAVALIER.

CAPTAIN GARNETT

JANET.

(C.)

LADY FLORENCE.

(R.)

(L.)

CLARKE'S STANDARD NOVEL LIBRARY,

(The Best Works by the Best Authors.)

NEW EDITIONS, POST 8vo, PICTURE BOARDS, PRICE 2s.
EXTRA CLOTH GILT, ILLUSTRATED, PRICE 3s. 6d.

By **W. STEPHENS HAYWARD**

(Author of "The Black Angel.")

THE BLACK ANGEL.

THE STAR OF THE SOUTH.

THE FIERY CROSS.

THE REBEL PRIVATEER.

LOVE'S TREASON ; or, the Vendetta and the Avenger.

TOM HOLT'S LOG.

LORD SCATTERBRAIN.

WILD AND WONDERFUL.

THE DEMONS OF THE SEA.

RODNEY RAY ; or, the Life and Adventures of a Scapegrace.

LOVE, AND ADVENTURE.

THE CLOUD KING ; or, Up in the Air and Down in the Sea.

By **Mrs. CHARLES CLARKE.**

DOUBTS AND CROSSES. A Novel with a Moral.

MUNRO OF FORT MUNRO. A Story of Sensation.

NO SECURITY. A Story of Rights and Wrongs.

NOT TRANSFERABLE ; or, Wooing, Winning, and Wearing.

SHARPS AND FLATS ; or, the Discord of Life.

TOPSY TURVY ; or, Ups and Downs and Ins and Outs.

THE VAGARIES OF A PEN. By VERSATILIUS.

ALBERT LUNEL. A Novel, by the late Lord BROUGHAM.

COMIC TALES (Illustrated by the late John Leech) by ALBERT SMITH.

KATHLEEN ; or, the Four-leaved Shamrock. By JOHN HOLLOWAY.

JACK THURLOW. By Dr. WILLIAM RUSSELL.

THE PRAIRIE HUNTER. By Captain FLACK.

LONDON :

CHARLES HENRY CLARKE, 13, PATERNOSTER ROW.

